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Sheltered Employment and Disability in the Classic  
Welfare State: Remploy c.1944-1979.

Andrew Mark Holroyde

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Huddersfield

November 2019

## **Abstract**

This thesis seeks to understand how Remploi and sheltered employment functioned in the period referred to as the classic welfare state, 1944-1979. Established as one of the measures contained in the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944, Remploi became the chief provider of sheltered employment for severely disabled people in post-war Britain. Yet with no detailed historical analysis of the company having been undertaken, differing accounts of its development have proliferated across disciplines. The prevailing view has presented it as a cohesive, catch-all, national scheme with a fundamentally humanitarian agenda. Using the extensive archival records relating to Remploi and other sheltered employment providers for the first time, this thesis examines the development of the company. It considers the fundamental areas of understanding Remploi in terms of why it was created, how it functioned, who it employed, and how far it came to dominate the wider field of sheltered employment provision. It argues that there was in fact no 'golden age' of Remploi and sheltered employment in the period. Remploi also represents a previously unexplored aspect of the welfare state and one of the few statutory measures put in place for disabled people. Therefore, as well as revealing how sheltered employment functioned in the period, this thesis uses Remploi as a new case study in addressing the current views and key debates concerning disability and the classic welfare state in Britain.

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## Acknowledgements

My first thanks goes to the History Department at the University of Huddersfield, who welcomed me as an undergraduate over ten years ago and have continued to be supportive ever since. In particular I would like to express my gratitude to Dr Katherine Lewis, Dr Pat Cullum, Dr Rebecca Gill, Professor Tim Thornton, Professor Paul Ward and Professor Barry Doyle, for all their help and support over the years. I would also like to thank Dr Charlie McGuire for accepting the role as second supervisor for this thesis, providing helpful feedback and offering kind words of encouragement. Most importantly I want to thank Dr Rob Ellis, without whom this thesis would not have been completed. Words cannot express my gratitude for his unwavering support and help throughout this process.

I would like to thank all the staff and fellow students in the *Heritage Consortium*, who helped to make the PhD such an enjoyable and stimulating experience. I am of course grateful to the AHRC for funding the project and the following bodies for providing additional grants:

The Crossley Heath Careers Fund  
The Economic History Society  
The Royal Historical Society  
The Society for the Social History of Medicine  
The Society for the Study of Labour History  
The University of Huddersfield.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the staff of Remploy who allowed me to undertake a placement with them, with particular thanks to Tom Hicks and David Felton for supporting the project throughout. I am also grateful for the help I have received from the staff at The National Archives on a number of research trips.

I have benefitted hugely from the support of many friends and colleagues throughout my studies and during the completion of this thesis. There are too many to mention here by name but I would like to say a huge thank you to you all. I would like to especially thank my Mum and Dad, as well as Laretta and Peter, for all their love and support throughout my education.

Finally, and most importantly, I want to express my love and eternal gratitude to Angie, who was utterly instrumental in allowing me to complete this thesis, and Archer, who made it all worthwhile.

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## **Abbreviations**

ALO	Area Liaison Officer
BEC	British Employer's Confederation
BLESMA	British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association
DA	Disability Alliance
DE	Department of Employment
DIG	Disablement Income Group
DPEA	Disabled Persons (Employment) Act
DRO	Disablement Resettlement Officer
ESA	Employment Services Agency
LA	Local Authority
MOL	Ministry of Labour
MOP	Ministry of Pensions
MP	Member of Parliament
MSC	Manpower Services Commission
TNA	The National Archives
NACED	National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled
NAIBD	National Association of Industries for the Blind and Disabled
NLBD	National League of the Blind and Disabled
NHS	National Health Service
SEC	Sheltered Employment Committee
TUC	Trades Union Congress

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

‘Remploi factories shut up shop – end of an era for disabled workers’.<sup>1</sup>

This headline featured in *The Guardian* as the final Remploi factories were closed in October 2013. The decision to close these factories was controversial and attracted widespread media attention, with more than one news outlet describing the closures as the ‘end of an era’.<sup>2</sup> These Remploi factories provided sheltered employment, a term used to denote workplaces dedicated to employing disabled people in a supposedly safe and supportive environment protected, or ‘sheltered’, from the competitive pressures of the open employment market. Remploi was established by the British government as part of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944 (DPEA), with the aim to provide sheltered employment on a national scale for those severely disabled people who were considered unable to gain work in ‘open’ or ‘mainstream’

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<sup>1</sup> D. Brindle, ‘Remploi factories shut up shop – the end of an era for disabled workers’, *The Guardian* (30.10.2013),

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2013/oct/30/remploy-factories-close-disabled-workers> (accessed 02/07/2018).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.; P. Marshal, ‘Workers mourn end of an era as last Remploi factories close’, *ITV News* (31.10.2013),

<http://www.itv.com/news/2013-10-30/workers-mourn-end-of-an-era-as-last-remploy-factories-close/> (accessed 02/07/2018); D. Brindle, ‘Charity heads support plans to close Remploi factories’, *The Guardian* (19.05.2007), <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2007/may/19/disability.socialcare> (accessed 02/07/2018); D. Brindle, ‘Remploi factory closures to put 1,700 disabled people out of work’, *The Guardian* (07.03.2012), <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2012/mar/07/remploy-factory-closures-disabled-workers> (accessed 02/07/2018); C. Clements, ‘On the scrapheap: Remploi workers’ Struggles five years on’, *STV News* (27.11.2017), <https://stv.tv/news/features/1403128-remploy-five-years-on/> (accessed 02/07/2018); A. White, ‘The Remploi factories have closed, but the pain continues’, *New Statesman* (16.05.2013), <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2013/05/remploy-factories-have-closed-pain-continues>, (accessed 02/07/2018); Disability Rights UK, *Remploi Statement* (undated), <https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/policy-campaigns/careers/remploy-statement> (accessed 02/07/2018).

employment. Funded by the Treasury, Remploy grew rapidly to become the dominant provider of sheltered employment in the post-war period. The scheme reached its height in the late 1980s when it employed over 9,000 disabled people in ninety-four sites across the United Kingdom. With the inclusion of disabled people in mainstream employment becoming an ever-greater priority at this time, Remploy changed to reflect this new aim. Remploy factories began to be closed down and replaced by ‘branches’ on the high street, which focused on providing employment services to support those with disabilities or health conditions seeking work. Following the closure of the final factories in 2013, further change occurred when, in April 2015, Remploy left government ownership.<sup>3</sup> Continuing to provide specialist employment services, Remploy is, at the time of writing, owned by *Maximus*, an international provider of health and employment services, and Remploy employees themselves who hold a twenty per cent stake in the company.<sup>4</sup>

Despite its place as the largest provider of sheltered employment in the United Kingdom, and as the pioneering attempt by any government to provide a national scheme, no detailed examination of Remploy has yet been undertaken by historians.<sup>5</sup> Indeed there has been no detailed consideration of any sheltered employment provider. The objective of this thesis is therefore to provide the first examination of Remploy and sheltered employment in the period 1944-1979, over the course of which the company provided work in its factories for more than 40,000 disabled people.<sup>6</sup> In so doing it provides an understanding of how Remploy and sheltered

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<sup>3</sup> ‘Our business’, *Remploy* (2017), <https://www.remploy.co.uk/about-us/our-business> (accessed 03/07/2018).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The National Archives (hereafter TNA) BM 10/2.

<sup>6</sup> ‘World Interest’, *Remploy News*, 124 (November, 1978).

employment functioned and uses this as a new way to consider some of the key areas of focus and debate concerning disability and the welfare state in Britain.

### From Disability Studies to Disability History

Given the occasionally blurred lines between disability history and disability studies, it is first necessary to properly position the aims and scope of this thesis in this regard. Until relatively recently, historians have shown little interest in disability as a category of analysis. As a result of this neglect, considerations of disability in the past were provided primarily by those working in the fields of sociology, anthropology, literature, and most notably, disability studies.<sup>7</sup> Sometimes referred to as ‘emancipatory disability studies’, this field emerged in Britain during the 1970s as disability activists sought to ‘rescue’ disabled people from the perceived overarching dominance of what was termed the ‘medical model’ of disability.<sup>8</sup> In this ‘medical model’, disability is defined in medical terms, with the focus on the ‘dysfunctional individual body’ which establishes ‘physical, social and economic parameters’ for disabled people.<sup>9</sup> Disability is therefore a physical fault with the individual, alleviated, if at all, through the intervention of medical professionals. The ‘social model’ was developed to directly challenge this perception of disability. This model stemmed from the activist work of the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation, which came to lead the disability movement in Britain, and its proponents, such as

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<sup>7</sup> H. Stiker, *A History of Disability* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1999); S. Burch, ‘Disability History: Suggested Readings – An Annotated Bibliography’, *The Public Historian*, vol. 27, no. 2 (2005), pp. 63-74; C. Kudlick, ‘Disability History: Why We Need Another “Other”’, *The American Historical Review*, vol. 108, no. 3 (2003), pp. 763-93.

<sup>8</sup> J. Anderson and A. Carden-Coyne, ‘Enabling the Past: New Perspectives in the History of Disability’, *European Review of History*, vol. 14, no. 4 (2007), pp. 447-57; J. Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain: ‘Soul of a Nation’* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2011), pp. 4-7.

<sup>9</sup> Anderson and Carden-Coyne, ‘Enabling the Past’; J. Anderson, ‘Review Article: Voices in the Dark: Representations of Disability in Historical Research’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 44, no. 1 (2009), pp. 107-16.

Vic Finkelstein and Michael Oliver, who would establish its outlook in the academic field, the latter coining the term ‘social model of disability’ in 1983.<sup>10</sup> The model defines disability in social terms ‘as the barriers erected, attitudes toward, and exclusion of disabled people by society’.<sup>11</sup> Thus it is not individual impairment that makes someone disabled, it is the constraints placed upon such individuals by wider society.<sup>12</sup> While it has not gone unchallenged itself, the social model has since become the dominant ‘structural analysis of disabled people’s social exclusion’ in Britain.<sup>13</sup> Although primarily concerned with contemporary issues, proponents of the social model such as Oliver and Colin Barnes have outlined the history of disabled people in their work, presenting a narrative of the increasing marginalisation, exclusion and isolation of disabled people alongside the growth of industrial capitalism.<sup>14</sup> Employment is therefore a central theme in such work, yet these interpretations of historical developments rest upon generalised assumptions, rather than detailed investigation, and reflect the purpose of the social model as a contemporary activist tool.<sup>15</sup> Such histories are therefore highly problematic and do not represent what would be considered robust analysis in the discipline of history.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> T. Shakespeare, ‘The Social Model of Disability’, in L.J. Davies (ed.) *The Disability Studies Reader*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (Abingdon, Routledge, 2013), p. 215.

<sup>11</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 4-7.

<sup>12</sup> Shakespeare, ‘The Social Model of Disability’, pp. 214-7.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 214; J. Morris, *Pride Against Prejudice: A Personal Politics of Disability* (London, The Women’s Press, 1991).

<sup>14</sup> M. Oliver, *The Politics of Disablement* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1990), pp. 25-42; M. Oliver and C. Barnes, *Disabled People and Social Policy: From Exclusion to Inclusion* (London, Longman, 1998), pp. 25-35.

<sup>15</sup> E. Hall, ‘Workspaces: Refiguring the Disability – Employment Debate’, in R. Butler and H. Parr (eds.) *Mind and Body Space: geographies of illness, impairment and disability* (Abingdon, Routledge, 1999), pp. 138-54.

<sup>16</sup> For criticisms see B.J. Gleeson, ‘Disability Studies: A historical materialist view’, *Disability & Society*, vol. 12, no. 2 (1997), pp. 179-202; B. Gleeson, *Geographies of Disability* (London, Routledge, 1999) pp. 22-3; Anderson and Carden-Coyne, ‘Enabling the Past’; Anderson, ‘Voices in the Dark’; J. Hampton, ‘Discovering Disability: The General Classes of Disabled People and the Classic Welfare State, 1948-1964’, *The Historian*, vol. 75, no. 1 (2013), p. 72.

In response to these problems, historians have recently begun to consider disability. The field of disability history has seen enormous growth since 2000, and is becoming an established area of research.<sup>17</sup> This growth was initially confined largely to the United States with the establishment of what was called the ‘new disability history’, a term used to distinguish it from ‘disability studies history’.<sup>18</sup> In one of the key works bearing this term as its title, Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky argued that ‘disability belongs with race, class, and gender as a “standard analytical tool” of historical analysis’.<sup>19</sup> Catherine J. Kudlick elaborated on this in 2003, suggesting that disability allowed a new perspective on all aspects of history, allowing historians ‘to reconsider virtually every concept, every event, every “given” we have taken for granted’.<sup>20</sup> With a number of published works across a huge range of themes and periods, dedicated academic conferences, and the formation of societies and associations devoted to the field, Beth Linker was able to claim in 2013 that disability history had truly ‘arrived’ in the U.S.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 4-7.

<sup>18</sup> As in Britain this grew out of disability studies and a tradition of activism, P. K. Longmore and L. Umansky, ‘Disability History: From the Margins to the Mainstream’, in P.K. Longmore and L. Umansky (eds.) *The New Disability History: American Perspectives* (New York, New York University Press, 2001), pp. 15-7.

<sup>19</sup> Longmore and Umansky, ‘Disability History’, p.15; S. Burch, ‘Disability History’.

<sup>20</sup> Kudlick, ‘Disability History’, p. 767.

<sup>21</sup> B. Linker, ‘On the Borderlands of Medical and Disability History: A Survey of the Fields’, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, vol. 87, no. 4 (2013), p. 499. There is still positioning taking place in the United States, with something of a renewal of the social vs. medical model debate in terms of the degree to which disability history is an element of medical history. See C. Kudlick, ‘Comment: On the Borderland of Medical and Disability History’, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, vol. 87, no. 4 (2013), pp. 540-59; J. Livingstone, ‘Comment: On the Borderland of Medical and Disability History’, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, vol. 87, no. 4 (2013), pp. 560-4; D.J. Wilson, ‘Comment: On the Borderland of Medical and Disability History’, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, vol. 87, no. 4 (2013), pp. 536-9. See also R. Garland-Thomson, (ed.) *Freakery: Cultural Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body* (New York, New York University Press, 1996); D.Z. Fleischer and F. Zames, *The Disability Rights Movement: From Charity to Confrontation* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 2011); K. Ott, D. Serlin, and S. Mihm, (eds.) *Artificial Parts, Practical Lives: Modern Histories of Prosthetics* (New York, New York University Press, 2002); S. Burch and M. Rembis, *Disability Histories* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2014).

The development of disability history in the United Kingdom was initially slower, but has recently gathered pace. The first comprehensive historical study was Anne Borsay's *Disability and Social Policy in Britain since 1750: A History of Exclusion*.<sup>22</sup> Whilst it is rightly held up as an important study and instigator for subsequent disability history, it is limited by the fact that Borsay, as her title suggests, was focused on subjectively supporting the notion of the assumed exclusion of disabled people propounded by the social model of disability.<sup>23</sup> The primary purpose of the work was not therefore to provide an academically rigorous and contextual survey of disability in British history, but was rather to 'raise personal and political consciousness' as a reflection of the aims of 'emancipatory disability studies'.<sup>24</sup> The field has since moved away from such links with disability studies to instead reflect something more of the 'new disability history', in terms of considering disability in historical contexts in the same way as with any other area of enquiry.

The first U.K.-based disability history conference took place in 2005, with three major volumes considering disability across a range of themes, periods and locations published the following year.<sup>25</sup> A further conference took place in 2010, and the following year saw the publication of a major study from Julie Anderson, *War,*

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<sup>22</sup> A. Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750: A History of Exclusion* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

<sup>23</sup> Both Meaghan Kowalsky and Jameel Hampton noted in reviews that the book was an important foundation study for disability history in Britain, M. Kowalsky, 'Review of *Disability and Social Policy in Britain since 1750: A History of Exclusion*', *Reviews in History* (2005), <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/453> (accessed 01/03/2016); J. Hampton, 'Review of *Disability and Social Policy in Britain since 1750: A History of Exclusion*', *Canadian Journal of History*, vol. 41, no. 2 (Autumn, 2006), pp. 391-3.

<sup>24</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 207.

<sup>25</sup> N. Pemberton, 'Enabling the Past: New Perspectives in the History of Disability', *History Workshop Journal*, no. 61 (2006), pp. 292-5; D.M.Turner and K. Stagg (eds.) *Social Histories of Disability and Deformity* (Abingdon, Routledge, 2006); W. Ernst (ed.) *Histories of the Normal and the Abnormal* (Abingdon, Routledge, 2006); P. Dale and J. Melling (eds.) *Mental Illness and Learning Disability since 1850: Finding a Place for Mental Disorder in the United Kingdom* (Oxon, Routledge, 2006).



*Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain: 'Soul of a Nation'*.<sup>26</sup> While noting that some progress had been made in the field, Anderson called in this work for further effort by historians to consider disability, using a range of historical sources and methodologies, in a variety of periods and locations, in order to provide a more balanced, contextual picture of disability in history.<sup>27</sup> The call appears to have been heeded with an increasing major engagement with disability by historians now apparent.<sup>28</sup> Since work on this thesis began in 2015 there has been a steady stream of journal articles in the field, as well as the publication of several important works such as Matthias Reiss' *Blind Workers Against Charity*, Jameel Hampton's *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain* and, most recently, David M. Turner and Daniel Blackie's *Disability in the Industrial Revolution*, which resulted from a major Wellcome Trust project on the topic.<sup>29</sup> This thesis itself builds on this recent work in the field as an

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<sup>26</sup> D.M. Turner, 'Disability History: Looking Forward to a Better Past?', *History Workshop Journal*, no.71 (2011), pp. 283-7.

<sup>27</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 1-11, 215-6.

<sup>28</sup> B. Curtis and S. Thompson, "A plentiful crop of cripples made by all this progress': Disability, Artificial Limbs and Working-Class Mutualism in the South Wales Coalfield, 1890-1948', *Social History of Medicine*, vol. 27, no. 4 (2014), pp. 708-27; Hampton, 'Discovering Disability', pp. 69-93; M. Mantin, 'Educational Experiences of Deaf Children in Wales: The Cambrian Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, 1847-1914', unpublished PhD Thesis, Swansea University (2010); J. Hampton, 'Disabled People and the Classic Welfare State, 1948-1975: Changes in Perception, Developments in Policy', PhD Thesis, University of Bristol (2012); G. Millward, 'Invalid definitions, invalid responses: disability and the welfare state, 1965-1995', unpublished PhD Thesis, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2013); *Disability and Industrial Society: A Comparative Cultural History of British Coalfields 1780-1948* (2012) <http://www.dis-ind-soc.org.uk/en/index.htm> (accessed 15/08/2017).

<sup>29</sup> M. Reiss, *Blind Workers Against Charity: The National League of the Blind of Great Britain and Ireland, 1893-1970* (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); J. Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain: Changes in perception and policy 1948-79* (Bristol, Policy Press, 2016); D. M. Turner and D. Blackie, *Disability in the Industrial Revolution: Physical impairment in British coalmining, 1780-1880* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2018); J. Anderson, "Jumpy Stump": Amputation and trauma in the first world war', *First World War Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, (2015), pp. 9-19; A. Borsay, 'Disability in British poetry of the First World War', *Disability & Society*, vol. 30, no. 4 (2015), pp. 499-512; G. Millward, 'Social Security Policy and the Early Disability Movement – Expertise, Disability, and the Government, 1965-77', *Twentieth Century British History*, vol. 26, no. 2 (2015), pp. 274-97; A. McIvor, 'Miners, silica and disability: the bi-national interplay between South Africa and the United Kingdom, c.1900-1930s', *American Journal of Occupational Medicine*, vol. 58, no. 1 (2015), pp. 23-30; B. Curtis and S. Thompson, 'This is the country of premature old men' Ageing and Aged Miners in the South Wales Coalfield, c.1880-1947', *Cultural and Social History*, vol. 12, no.4 (2015), pp. 587-606; M. Mantin, 'Coalmining and the National Scheme for Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the First World War', *Social History*, vol. 41, no. 2 (2016), pp. 155-70; G. Millward, 'A Disability Act? The Vaccine Damage Payments Act 1979 and the British Government's Response to the Pertussis Vaccine Scare', *Social History of Medicine*, vol. 30, no. 2 (2017), pp. 429-47; A. Turner and A.

attempt to engage with disability within the discipline of history, through detailed research and analysis, divorced from the activist position associated with ‘emancipatory disability studies’, and thereby add to our understanding of disability within historical contexts. This thesis aims therefore to provide the first consideration of Remploy and sheltered employment, and to add this to the current understanding of disability and the welfare state.

### Remploy and Sheltered Employment: The Current Orthodoxy

That an examination of Remploy, or indeed of sheltered employment in general, has not been undertaken until now has not meant that the company has gone unmentioned. Remploy is typically referenced as *the* example of post-war sheltered employment, yet it is evoked entirely uncritically. This is the case across academic disciplines, in public discourse, and within the company itself currently. The result is that Remploy simply appears in scholarly works across disciplines as a fully-formed and coherent scheme with a pre-determined and usually uncomplicated agenda. The company and from this, sheltered employment more generally, are then appropriated in various ways to support whatever wider conclusions are desired.

This begins with Remploy’s inception and creation as part of the DPEA. Occasional references have been made to the birth of Remploy, but few attempts have been made to explain its creation.<sup>30</sup> The popular viewpoint is that Remploy was created as a

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McIvor, ‘Bottom Dog Men’: Disability, Social Welfare and Advocacy in the Scottish Coalfields in the Interwar Years, 1918-1939’, *Scottish Historical Review*, vol. 96, no. 2 (2017), pp. 187-213; B. Curtis and S. Thompson, ‘Disability and the Family in South Wales Coalfield Society, c.1920-1939’, *Family and Community History*, vol. 20, no. 1, (2017), pp. 25-44; *Disability and Industrial Society: A Comparative Cultural History of British Coalfields 1780-1948* (2012) <http://www.dis-ind-soc.org.uk/en/index.htm> (accessed 15/08/2017).

<sup>30</sup> Remploy is referenced most commonly in terms of the segregation of disabled workers, for example in Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy In Britain Since 1750*, p. 135; S. Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving: Disabled Children During the Second World War* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2013), p.

direct result of the Second World War, and this has remained the long-held understanding of Remploy themselves and has been the focus in media reports on the company.<sup>31</sup> Scholarly works across disciplines have also tended to simply identify Remploy as an element of wartime legislation.<sup>32</sup> In some cases this has been made more explicit, with both Reiss and Anderson, for example, suggesting that Remploy came about as a direct result of the experiences of the Second World War.<sup>33</sup>

The most influential interpretation of Remploy's creation was provided by Helen Bolderson, who examined the development of the DPEA in *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*. For Bolderson, Remploy was created as a result of a bargain with

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168; S. Humphries and P. Gordon, *Out of Sight: The Experience of Disability 1900-1950* (Plymouth, Northcote House, 1992), p. 138. Further brief references are made in, L. Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain: A Social History of Tuberculosis in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 237; A. Lande, R. Lowe and N. Whiteside, *The Development of the Welfare State 1939-1951: A guide to documents in the Public Record Office* (London, HMSO, 1992), pp. 203-4; P. Bridgen and R. Lowe, *Welfare Policy Under the Conservatives 1951-1964* (London, PRO, 1998), p. 262. Also in the field of Social Policy in S. Shah and M. Priestley, *Disability and Social Change: Private Lives and Public Policies* (Bristol, Policy Press, 2011), p. 139; E. Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1979), pp. 55-6.

<sup>31</sup> T. Jeffries, 'The Remploy Resource', *Industrial Management & Data Systems*, vol. 86, no. 1/2 (1986), p. 7; A. Kochan, 'Remploy: disabled and thriving', *Assembly Automation*, vol. 16, no. 1 (1996), p. 40; 'Who we are', *Remploy* (2017), [http://www.remploy.co.uk/info/20124/find\\_out\\_more/72/who\\_we\\_are](http://www.remploy.co.uk/info/20124/find_out_more/72/who_we_are) (accessed 27/06/2017); 'Remploy's Journey', *Remploy* (2017) [http://www.remploy.co.uk/downloads/file/141/rempleys\\_journeypdf](http://www.remploy.co.uk/downloads/file/141/rempleys_journeypdf) (accessed 27/06/2017); N. Fox, 'What are Remploy workers doing now?', (31.11.2014), *BBC News* <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-29843567> (accessed 27/06/2017); J. Beattie, 'Hundreds of axed disabled workers still jobless TWO years after Remploy factory closures', *Mirror* (05.01.2015), <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/hundreds-axed-disabled-workers-still-4919835> (accessed 27/06/2017); 'Remploy's history as specialist disabled employer remembered as final factories close', *ITV Report*, (31.10.2013), <http://www.itv.com/news/2013-10-31/final-remploy-factory-closes/> (accessed 27/06/2017); 'Disability History: Disability, Rehabilitation and Work', *Historic England* (2017), <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/disability-history/1945-to-the-present-day/disability-rehabilitation-and-work/> (accessed 11/08/2017).

<sup>32</sup> J. Anderson, 'Turned into Taxpayers': Paraplegia, Rehabilitation and Sport at Stoke Mandeville, 1944-56', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 38, no. 3 (2003), p. 469; E. Elsey, 'The Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the Two World Wars', unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Teesside (1994), pp. 276-7; Oliver, *The Politics of Disablement*, pp. 88-9; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 168; M. Hyde, 'Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s: The experiences of disabled workers in the UK', *Disability & Society*, vol. 13, no. 2 (1998), pp. 199-215; Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain*, p. 237.

<sup>33</sup> Reiss, *Blind Workers Against Charity*, p. 140; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 183-5.

industry to segregate ‘non-productive’ workers away from open employment.<sup>34</sup> This view was then repeated in Steve Humphries and Pamela Gordon’s *Out of Sight: The Experience of Disability 1900-1950*, and subsequently adopted by Borsay in her hugely influential *Disability and Social Policy*, to reinforce the notion of Remploy as an element in the perpetual discrimination of disabled people.<sup>35</sup> In other cases too, Remploy’s formation has been invoked in support of overarching statements about employment provision in the post-war period.<sup>36</sup> In all these mentions or considerations of Remploy’s creation, no detailed examination of the records relating to Remploy and the formation of the company have actually taken place.

Appearing then out of the Second World War, the general assumption is that Remploy simply sprang into existence fully-formed as a coherent scheme with a clear purpose and *modus operandi*. Yet there have been differing views on the primary function of Remploy and sheltered employment in this period presented by academics across fields. The dominant narrative, espoused by disability studies scholars such as Barnes, Sonali Shah and Mark Priestley, suggests that ‘until the late 1970s the role of sheltered workshops was widely regarded as humanitarian rather than economic’.<sup>37</sup> In this view, Remploy therefore operated primarily as a social service rather than a business, with welfare prioritised over commercial efficiency. This function was then transformed following the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979 to one in which the principles of commercial efficiency and economics became paramount.<sup>38</sup> A similar

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<sup>34</sup> H. Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation: Conflicts in the Development of Social Policy 1914-1946* (London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1991), pp. 109-110.

<sup>35</sup> Humphries and Gordon, *Out of Sight*, p. 138; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy In Britain Since 1750*. This was also highlighted by Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, pp. 168-70.

<sup>36</sup> Hampton, ‘Discovering Disability’, p. 77; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 183-5.

<sup>37</sup> C. Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination* (London, C. Hurst & Co., 2000), p. 73; Shah and Priestley, *Disability and Social Change*, pp. 138-40.

<sup>38</sup> Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 73.

notion was put forward by the historian Gareth Millward, who highlighted the 1980s as the period in which Remploy underwent economic rationalisation, something he viewed as a significant change from previous policy.<sup>39</sup> The dominant perception is therefore something of a ‘golden age’ of Remploy during the period of the classic welfare state, before the company was placed under economic pressures by the Thatcher governments which fundamentally changed the focus of its central purpose from providing a social service to maximising its commercial efficiency. An alternative, and contradictory, view, espoused by social policy scholars Susan Lonsdale and Eda Topliss, proposed instead that there was always something of an ‘uneasy compromise’ in Remploy and sheltered employment between humanitarian and economic considerations.<sup>40</sup> With the exception of Millward, these works reflect a contemporary focus of the authors on sheltered employment with no attempt to delve into historical evidence.

A similar situation arises in terms of who was being employed by Remploy and upon what basis. The composition of Remploy’s workforce has largely been taken for granted by academics across disciplines. In many cases, mentions of Remploy have, with a variety of phrasing, simply referenced that it was for disabled people,<sup>41</sup> or for severely disabled people.<sup>42</sup> Other descriptions of Remploy, such as those of Borsay,

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<sup>39</sup> Millward, ‘Invalid definitions, invalid responses’, pp. 184-5.

<sup>40</sup> S. Lonsdale, *Work and Inequality* (Harlow, Longman, 1985), p. 138; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 55-7.

<sup>41</sup> Hampton, ‘Discovering Disability’, p. 80; Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain*, p. 237; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 168; Hyde, ‘Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s’, p. 200; Brigden and Lowe, *Welfare Policy Under the Conservatives 1951-1964*, pp. 262-3.

<sup>42</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 109; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 56; Reiss, *Blind Workers Against Charity*, p. 139; Elsey, ‘The Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the Two World Wars’, pp. 276-7; Anderson, ‘Turned into Taxpayers’, p. 469 refers to ‘seriously disabled’; Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 71; Land, Lowe and Whiteside, *The Development of the Welfare State 1939-1951*, p. 204; Mantin, ‘Coalmining and the National Scheme for Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the First World War’, p. 170.

Bolderson and Pat Thane have suggested it was reserved for those disabled people deemed to be ineffective or non-productive workers.<sup>43</sup> The common assumption here has been that in forming its workforce, Remploy simply followed the outline of the scheme as stated in the DPEA, and successfully provided employment for those too severely disabled to be considered able to gain employment in the open job market, officially designated by the Act as ‘Section II’ people. This view of Remploy presents it as a catch-all scheme for these severely disabled people, with a universal and open standard of employee recruitment and retention.

Similarly, with a single exception, all descriptions of the Remploy workforce make no mention of any gender distinction, thereby implying that gender was not a factor in who was able to access Remploy. This further adds to the image of Remploy as a catch-all scheme as it assumes that it was open to both disabled men and women equally. Consideration of the place of women in Remploy specifically has only been given brief consideration by Anderson who suggested, without detailed examination, that women were excluded from Remploy due to its nature as an industrial enterprise, as well as issues of accommodation and transport.<sup>44</sup> Yet, the understanding of the current senior management of the company, expressed in discussions during the creation of this thesis, is that a key development in Remploy’s history was an ever-increasing proportion of women entering into its factories, but with no understanding of how, or when, this occurred.

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<sup>43</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 135; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 109; H. Bolderson, ‘The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance’, *Journal of Social Policy*, vol. 9, no. 2 (1980), p. 178; P. Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State, 2nd Edition* (London, Longman, 1996), p. 225, who does not mention Remploy by name but refers to the sheltered workshops provided by the DPEA.

<sup>44</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 170; J. Anderson, ‘British Women, Disability and the Second World War’, *Contemporary British History*, vol. 20, no. 1 (2006), p. 49.

Other descriptions of Remploy's workforce have highlighted specific groups of disabled people. One such enduring view has held that the company was created specifically for disabled ex-service personnel who then formed its workforce. This has framed Remploy's own explanation of its origins, with the 'About Remploy' section of the company website, at the time of writing this thesis, explaining that 'we helped to support the thousands of men and women disabled during the Second World War'.<sup>45</sup> Similarly, the accompanying website timeline of Remploy's development begins in 1945 with the caption 'Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Ltd formed to support disabled World War II Veterans'.<sup>46</sup> Reference to this particular group when describing the workforce of Remploy also appears in numerous media reports on the company and in Historic England's 'Disability in Time and Place' project which seeks to highlight disability in Britain's history for a popular audience.<sup>47</sup> Most recently, Roddy Slorach in his socialist interpretation of disability history has echoed this view, suggesting Remploy factories were 'originally built to employ disabled ex-servicemen'.<sup>48</sup> This is largely therefore the understanding of the Remploy workforce which has seeped into the public consciousness. This has also happened to a degree in academia. Historians considering disability have often tended

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<sup>45</sup> 'Who we are', *Remploy* (2017),

[http://www.remploy.co.uk/info/20124/find\\_out\\_more/72/who\\_we\\_are](http://www.remploy.co.uk/info/20124/find_out_more/72/who_we_are) (accessed 27/06/2017).

<sup>46</sup> 'Remploy's Journey', *Remploy* (2017)

[http://www.remploy.co.uk/downloads/file/141/rempleys\\_journey.pdf](http://www.remploy.co.uk/downloads/file/141/rempleys_journey.pdf) (accessed 27/06/2017).

<sup>47</sup> Ex-Servicemen are typically highlighted, sometimes alongside 'miners', for example, Fox, 'What are Remploy workers doing now?', *BBC News* (31.11.2014), <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-29843567> (accessed 27/06/2017); Beattie, 'Hundreds of axed disabled workers still jobless TWO years after Remploy factory closures', *Mirror* (05.01.2015), <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/hundreds-axed-disabled-workers-still-4919835> (accessed 27/06/2017); 'Remploy's history as specialist disabled employer remembered as final factories close', *ITV Report*, (31.10.2013), <http://www.itv.com/news/2013-10-31/final-remploy-factory-closes/> (accessed 27/06/2017); Historic England, 'Disability History: Disability, Rehabilitation and Work' (2017), <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/disability-history/1945-to-the-present-day/disability-rehabilitation-and-work/> (accessed 11/08/2017).

<sup>48</sup> R. Slorach, *A Very Capitalist Condition: A History and Politics of Disability* (London, Bookmarks, 2016), p. 141.

to focus on those disabled during war.<sup>49</sup> Disabled ex-service personnel have been considered as a distinct group who received preferential treatment in terms of welfare and employment owing to the origin of their disability.<sup>50</sup> Such work has tended to focus on the durations of the two World Wars themselves or the inter-war period, with very little consideration of the place of disabled ex-service personnel post-1945.<sup>51</sup> The exception is Anderson who, in considering the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, highlighted Remploy as part of the continued ‘special treatment’ this group received.<sup>52</sup> In addition to this focus on ex-service personnel, Anderson further suggested that Remploy concentrated its provision upon people with certain disabilities or conditions, specifically ‘pulmonary tuberculosis, congenital deformities, heart and lung disease, and epilepsy’.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*; J. Anderson, ‘Jumpy Stump’: Amputation and trauma in the first world war’, pp. 9-19; Anderson, ‘Turned into Taxpayers’; J. Anderson and N. Pemberton, ‘Walking Alone: Aiding the War and Civilian Blind in the Inter-war Period’, *European Review of History*, vol. 14, no. 4 (2007), pp. 459-79; J. Meyer, ‘Not Septimus Now’: wives of disabled veterans and cultural memory of the First World War in Britain’, *Women’s History Review*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2004), pp. 117-138; M. Kowalsky, ‘This Honourable Obligation’: The King’s National Roll Scheme for Disabled Ex-servicemen, 1915-1944’, *European Review of History*, vol. 14, no. 4 (2007), pp. 567-84; Borsay, ‘Disability in British poetry of the First World War’, pp. 499-512; J. Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men’s Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London, Reaktion Books, 1996); D. Cohen, *The War Come Home: Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany 1914-1939* (Los Angeles, University of California Press, 2001); D. A. Gerber (ed.) *Disabled Veterans in History* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2012); D., Blackie, ‘Disabled Revolutionary War Veterans and the Construction of Disability in the Early United States, c.1776-1840’, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Helsinki (2010); F.L. Bernstein, ‘Rehabilitation Staged: How Soviet Doctors “Cured” Disability in the Second World War’, in S. Burch and M. Rembis (eds.) *Disability History* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2014), pp. 218-236; J.M. Kinder, ‘Lest We Forget’: Disabled Veterans and the Politics of War Remembrance in the United States’ in S. Burch and M. Rembis (eds.) *Disability History* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2014), pp. 163-182; K. Muir, ‘That bastard’s following me!’ Mentally ill Australian veterans struggling to maintain control’, in D.M. Turner, and K. Stagg, (eds.) *Social Histories of Disability and Deformity* (Abingdon, Routledge, 2006), pp. 161-174; J. Reznick, ‘Work-Therapy and the Disabled British Soldier in Great Britain in the First World War: The Case of Shepherd’s Bush Military Hospital, London’, in D. A. Gerber (ed.) *Disabled Veterans in History* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2012), pp. 185-203.

<sup>50</sup> W. Gagen, ‘Remastering the Body, Renegotiating Gender: Physical Disability and Masculinity during the First World War, the Case of J.B. Middlebrook’, *European Review of History*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 536-7; Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, pp. 37-9; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 53-4.

<sup>51</sup> M. Kowalsky, ‘Enabling the Great War: ex-servicemen, the mixed economy of welfare and the social construction of disability, 1899-1930’, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Leeds (2007), p. 236.

<sup>52</sup> Anderson, ‘Turned into Taxpayers’, pp. 469-70; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 211.

<sup>53</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 183.



In all these descriptions of Remploy, it is assumed that the production workforce consisted entirely of disabled people, thereby precluding any notion of a non-disabled workforce. This is also implicit in descriptions of sheltered employment as ‘segregated employment’, with the absolute separation of disabled people in such places, away from the non-disabled population.<sup>54</sup> That the company only ever employed disabled people in its production workforce was also the belief of Remploy themselves, again expressed in conversations with senior management during the creation of this thesis. It was stressed that this was understood to be a key difference between Remploy and sheltered employment programmes in other countries, in which the inclusion of a proportion of non-disabled workers to boost productivity was the norm. It was suggested that this was often cited in discussions with policy makers and disability employment providers around the world, as one of the reasons why Remploy’s factories ultimately proved uneconomical in that they had lacked the ‘advantage’ of a non-disabled element in their workforce. Such views run contrary to the claim made by Topliss in the 1970s, that the inclusion of a proportion of non-disabled workers was ‘always envisaged’ for Remploy ‘in order to ensure the efficiency of organisation and running of production’.<sup>55</sup>

Furthermore, with any mention or consideration of post-war sheltered employment focusing almost exclusively upon Remploy there has been a widespread assumption that it became the only meaningful provider. The impression is that the voluntary sheltered workshops which existed prior to the war, which themselves have received

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<sup>54</sup> Millward, ‘Invalid definitions, invalid responses’, pp. 184-5; Humphries and Gordon, *Out of Sight*, p. 138; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 168; Slorach, *A Very Capitalist Condition*, p. 141; Hyde, ‘Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s’, p. 200; Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 74.

<sup>55</sup> Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 55-6.

only very limited attention from historians, were made redundant following the establishment of Remploy.<sup>56</sup> Only Anderson has suggested that voluntary sheltered employment survived in the immediate post-war period, though to what extent is unclear, and this is again not based on detailed investigation.<sup>57</sup> The question of whether alternative provision existed in sheltered employment following the creation of Remploy has not yet been addressed, nor has any other provider been given any serious consideration.

As well as the various contradictions and gaps in understanding in these areas, it is also the case that wherever Remploy is referenced it is presented as a coherent scheme, with no sense of any discrepancy between policy and how it functioned in reality. Remploy is assumed to be a coherent, monolithic scheme from its very inception. This is largely because any considerations of Remploy have relied on very limited sources, if any, which invariably reflect only central policy. The result is that all considerations of Remploy assume a coherent scheme with a unified policy and uniform factories. How Remploy and sheltered employment operated at the factory level and how far this reflected the aims of the legislation and the policies espoused, has not yet been considered.

There is therefore no reliable account of even the fundamental areas of Remploy in terms of how and why it was created, how it functioned, who it was for, and how far it dominated the provision of sheltered employment. This understanding of Remploy itself is important. With the company commonly used across disciplines as *the* example of sheltered employment, it is important these areas of understanding are

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<sup>56</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*; Cohen, *The War Come Home*; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*.

<sup>57</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 184.

illuminated. Furthermore, as the accepted chief provider of sheltered employment in the period, it is the key to understanding how this form of employment and welfare was understood and functioned for severely disabled people. Our understanding of disability in post-war Britain is not complete without consideration of Remploy, which remains today a leading provider of disability employment services in Britain. As the first attempt to provide sheltered employment on this scale, it has also served as an international exemplar. Although sheltered employment has largely been phased out in the U.K, it is still relatively common across the world, and has also remained controversial with ongoing debates about its validity in serving disabled people.<sup>58</sup> An understanding of how Remploy functioned is not therefore solely a question of academic accuracy, but also of potential relevance today in informing such debates. Should the question of sheltered employment be revisited again in the U.K. in future, an understanding of how it functioned in the past is again important. This thesis therefore provides the first detailed examination of sheltered employment, primarily in the form of Remploy, in the period 1944-1979, in order to address these fundamental areas of understanding.

### The Classic Welfare State

The other key aim of this thesis is to add the case of Remploy and sheltered employment to our understanding of post-war disability and the welfare state. There

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<sup>58</sup> See for example, E.W. Carter, S. Bendetson and C.H. Guiden, 'Family Perspectives on the Appeals of and Alternatives to Sheltered Employment for Individuals with Severe Disabilities', *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, vol. 43, no. 3 (2018), pp. 145-164; E. Hemphill and C.T. Kulik, 'The Tyranny of Fit: Yet another Barrier to Mainstream Employment for Disabled People in Sheltered Employment', *Social Policy & Administration*, vol. 51, no. 7 (2017), pp. 1119-1134; L. Visier, 'Sheltered employment for persons with disabilities', *International Labour Review*, vol. 137, no. 3 (1998), pp. 347-65; M.S. Soeker et al., 'The Experiences and perceptions of persons with disabilities regarding work skills development in sheltered and protective workshops', *Work*, vol. 59, no. 2 (2018), pp. 303-14; L. Van Der Torre and M. Fenger, 'Policy innovations for including disabled people in the labour market: A study of innovative practices of Dutch sheltered work companies', *International Social Security Review*, vol. 67, no. 2 (2014), pp. 67-84.

can be few aspects of modern British history which capture the public imagination and receive as much comment as the 'welfare state', examination of which is not work confined to historians, with a whole range of disciplines bringing along their own terms of reference, areas of focus, and theoretical frameworks.<sup>59</sup> Yet an immediate issue is the definition of the term itself.<sup>60</sup> As Derek Fraser expressed, the concept is difficult to define as 'it has meant different things to different people'.<sup>61</sup> Many scholars have traced the origins of the term in various contexts and called into question how viable a term it is to describe the post-war programme of social welfare in Britain.<sup>62</sup> Despite these musings, the fact is that the term continues to be used and as such requires a usable definition. One oft-cited definition was provided by Asa Briggs in 1961. He described a welfare state as one in which

organised power is deliberately used (through politics and administration) in an effort to modify the play of market forces in at least three directions – first, by guaranteeing individuals and families a minimum income...second, by

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<sup>59</sup> Historians, political scientists, sociologists, and social policy theorists for example, D. Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), p. 4; G. Esping-Anderson, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1990); C. Pierson, *Beyond the Welfare State? The New Political Economy of Welfare* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1991), chapters 1-3. See also Michael Hill who described a macro- and micro- theory, alongside a 'middle and lower range theory', M. Hill, *The Welfare State in Britain: A Political History since 1945* (Aldershot, Edward Elgar Publishing, 1993), pp. 3-10; R. Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) pp. 23-48; H. Glennerster, *British Social Policy: 1945 to the Present*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (Oxford, Blackwell Publishing, 2007), pp. 8-19. The most comprehensive collation of historical approaches was provided by Derek Fraser, who identified eight in total: whig, pragmatic, bureaucratic, ideological, conspiratorial, capitalist, democratic and pluralist, D. Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 2; See also, K. Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State, c.1800-1993* (Keele, Keele University Press, 1995), p.10.

<sup>60</sup> As Rodney Lowe notes, 'There is no agreement amongst historians and social scientists over when the first welfare states were established or what the term actually means', Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, p. 12. For a useful overview of political/social science view, see Pierson, *Beyond the Welfare State?*, pp. 6-7. Derek Fraser notes that 'definitions of the welfare state are closely entwined with the British experience', D. Fraser, *The Welfare State* (Stroud, Sutton, 2000), p. 1.

<sup>61</sup> Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, p. 1. Nicholas Timmins also notes the difficulty in establishing clear parameters for the 'welfare state', N. Timmins, *The Five Giants: A Biography of the Welfare State*, New Edition (London, Harper Collins, 2001), pp. 6-7. Douglas Ashford attacked the 'myth of coherence' in discussion of welfare states, D. E. Ashford, 'The Whig Interpretation of the Welfare State', *Journal of Policy History*, vol. 1, no. 1 (1989), pp. 24-25.

<sup>62</sup> For discussion of some of these see, Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 12-16. Howard Glennerster commented on the terms' 'uncertain paternity' suggesting it probably originated in the German term *Wohlfahrtsstaat*, in the 1920s, Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, p. 1.

narrowing the extent of insecurity...third, by ensuring that all citizens without distinction of status and class are offered the best standards available in relation to an agreed range of social services.<sup>63</sup>

Rodney Lowe took a pragmatic approach and defined 'a welfare state' as having 'three immutable characteristics'.<sup>64</sup> A welfare state is thus born from the 1940s, has a government which 'actively accepts responsibility' for the welfare of all citizens, and which supplies those citizens with 'an inalienable core of universal services'.<sup>65</sup> For Keith Laybourn, the welfare state could be characterised through the government interruption of the free market to protect vulnerable groups, to offer social services, and to safeguard the general population from the 'exigencies of working life'.<sup>66</sup> The issue of precisely defining a welfare state is perhaps of greater importance for debates which consider the extent to which Britain has indeed been a welfare state at various times. The more practical definitions of Lowe and Laybourn suffice for describing the programme of social provision enacted in Britain following the Second World War.<sup>67</sup>

This thesis is focused upon the period often referred to as the 'classic welfare state', which provides both the timeframe and the key areas of analysis. This term is used to distinguish the welfare provision which emerged after the war and existed until either 1976 with the imposition of cash limits and the abandonment of full employment, or

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<sup>63</sup> A. Briggs, 'The Welfare State in Historical Perspective', *European Journal of Sociology*, vol. 2, no. 2 (1961), p. 228; J. Brown, *The British Welfare State: A Critical History* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1995), p. 5.

<sup>64</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, p. 16.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>66</sup> Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 9.

<sup>67</sup> As Michael Hill notes, for certain purposes, it is sufficient to indicate that 'Britain belongs to that group of advanced industrial nations in which elaborate state-subsidised social policies have been built up', Hill, *The Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 3-4. Likewise, Derek Fraser suggests that some features 'are clear in practice', Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, p. 1. This is not to underestimate the danger which Geoffrey Finlayson suggests lies with uncritical uses of the term, G. Finlayson, *Citizen, State, and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 1-7. However, an over-analysis of the term does not necessarily equate to clarity in cases where the definition is not central to the argument.

1979 with the election of the Thatcher government, at which points fundamental changes in the welfare state are seen to have occurred.<sup>68</sup> The period is characterised as one of faith in increased statutory welfare and the role of the state, and the central importance of the maintenance of full, or near-full, employment.<sup>69</sup> As such, the perception is of the period as something of a ‘golden age’ in terms of both welfare and employment.<sup>70</sup> This has not gone unchallenged in terms of other provisions of the welfare state, and yet in the case of Rempoy this perception clearly remains, with the dominant view of that of a ‘golden age’ of Rempoy in the period until the economic rationalisation that supposedly followed in the 1980s.<sup>71</sup> With no detailed consideration of Rempoy having taken place, the company has been entirely absent from the major examinations of this period. Rempoy was an important part of the post-war welfare settlement for disabled people, and is unusual in that it straddles the boundaries between the two key areas of the classic welfare state – welfare and employment. It therefore provides a pertinent case study to examine these aspects of the ‘golden age’ of the classic welfare state for disabled people.

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<sup>68</sup> A. Digby, *British Welfare Policy: Workhouse to Workfare* (London, Faber and Faber, 1989); Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, p. 287; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, p. 77; Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, pp. 8-9; B. Harris, *The Origins of the British Welfare State* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 301; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 7, 32, 73; D. Gladstone, ‘The welfare state and the state of welfare’, in D. Gladstone, (ed.) *British Social Welfare: Past, Present and Future* (London, UCL Press, 1995), p. 2; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, pp. 221-237; R. Page, *Revisiting the Welfare State* (Maidenhead, Open University Press, 2007), p. 47; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*; B. Coxall and L. Robins, *British Politics Since the War* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1998), p. 49.

<sup>69</sup> Hampton, ‘Disabled People and the Classic Welfare State’, p. 1.

<sup>70</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, p. 84; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, p. 277; K.O. Morgan, *Britain Since 1945: The People’s Peace*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>71</sup> Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, pp. 8-9; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 139-172; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 214; I. Gough, *The Political Economy of the Welfare State, Critical Texts in Social Work and the Welfare State* (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 1979); C. Barnett, *The Audit of War: The Illusion and Reality of Britain as a Great Nation* (London, Macmillan, 1986), p. 26.

## Disability in the Welfare State

As Hampton remarked, disability has been largely absent from work considering the welfare state, both in the twentieth century and in the *longue durée*, with a tendency for historians to focus on areas ‘with more contemporary, historical, and popular esteem’, such as the National Health Service (NHS).<sup>72</sup> In terms of the period under consideration in this thesis, any meaningful consideration of disability is indeed a stark omission, with the major works in the field including only occasional and brief mentions of disability legislation and issues.<sup>73</sup> With such neglect it was until recently left for those working in other disciplines, such as social and political scientists, to consider the place of disabled people in the welfare state. The most notable example being Deborah Stone’s *The Disabled State*, which proposed the existence of a ‘distributive dilemma’ in disability policy, with society having to balance the need to promote the impetus to work with provision for those unable to do so.<sup>74</sup> Despite its influence, Stone’s study has similar limitations to ‘disability studies history’, with its wide focus in term of place and chronology, and its proposition of an overarching theory without empirical evidence.<sup>75</sup> As such it is largely limited in its use for historians to being an interesting theoretical primer for more detailed historical analysis. A more focused contribution was made by Sally Sainsbury, who outlined some aspects of disability legislation in the post-war period through the development

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<sup>72</sup> Hampton, ‘Discovering Disability’, pp. 71-2.

<sup>73</sup> Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, pp. 258, 271-2; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 146, 166, 277-8, 283, 346; K. Jones, *The Making of Social Policy in Britain 1830-1990*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (London, Athlone Press, 1996), pp. 125-7, 153-5, 174, 191; Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, pp. 46, 118, 237-8; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, pp. 224-5; Harris, *The Origins of the British Welfare State*; Hill, *The Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 14, 92, 116-7; Finlayson, *Citizen, State, and Social Welfare in Britain*, pp. 220-6, 316-7, 327-9; Timmins, *The Five Giants*, pp. 19, 55-6, 227-8, 274, 285-7, 342-3; A. Deacon, ‘Spending More to Achieve less? Social security since 1945’ in D. Gladstone, (ed.) *British Social Welfare: Past, Present and Future* (London, UCL Press, 1995), p. 86; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 251; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 67; Brown, *The British Welfare State*, pp. 39-41; Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, pp. 91-3.

<sup>74</sup> D. Stone, *The Disabled State* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1984).

<sup>75</sup> For criticisms see B.J. Gleeson, ‘Disability Studies: A historical materialist view’, *Disability & Society*, vol. 12, no. 2 (1997), pp. 179-202.

of the Personal Social Services.<sup>76</sup> Though offering greater historical context this still provided only a brief survey over the period in order to consider more recent developments which reflected the true focus of her work.<sup>77</sup>

Borsay's major study of disability, though including the period considered in this thesis as part of her broad timeframe from 1750, similarly remains limited in its application here. Such limitations which have been highlighted, include a noticeable lack of primary evidence, the tendency to make sweeping statements without evidence, very generalised analysis of periods, and a geographically narrow focus.<sup>78</sup> This is particularly true in terms of the period considered in this thesis, elements of which are included in the thematic chapters into which the study is structured but which lack substantive detail. The major issue, as previously mentioned, is with the study's very nature and purpose to support a pre-determined conclusion. The argument in relation to disabled people was that the measures of the welfare state 'failed to guarantee them against poverty and financial exclusion', but this conclusion was never in doubt.<sup>79</sup> Despite these limitations, the work does serve to highlight many of the key areas of the welfare state which were relevant to disabled people. The study as a whole, however, does not offer a nuanced analysis and provide a genuine historical contextualisation of disability in the period.

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<sup>76</sup> S. Sainsbury, 'Disabled People and the Personal Social Services', in D. Gladstone, (ed.) *British Social Welfare: Past, Present and Future* (London, UCL Press, 1995), pp. 183-195.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> For these see Kowalsky, 'Review of *Disability and Social Policy in Britain since 1750: A History of Exclusion*', *Reviews in History* (2005), <http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/453> (accessed 01/03/2016); Hampton, 'Review of *Disability and Social Policy in Britain since 1750: A History of Exclusion*'.

<sup>79</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 168. Hampton suggests that this overall conclusion is a 'good basis for more particular examinations of how and why there was little change in this area', Hampton, 'Discovering Disability', p. 72.



As part of the growing interest in disability history, work which considers disability and the welfare state firmly within the discipline of history has recently begun to appear, with the first major study of this produced by Hampton in 2016.<sup>80</sup> Focusing on those disabled people described as the ‘general classes’, those whose disability was not the result of injury received in war or from industrial accident, Hampton addressed how welfare policy for, and perceptions of, disabled people changed over the period 1948-1979.<sup>81</sup> Hampton’s overall argument was that these general classes of disabled people were failed by the initial elements which established the welfare state, and though they were gradually recognised as a group in need of further provision, statutory measures remained limited both in terms of their aims and impact.<sup>82</sup> Thus Hampton concluded that the general classes were largely excluded from statutory welfare provision, and thus remained ‘the wretched’ of the welfare state.<sup>83</sup>

Such work on disability has tended to focus on social services and welfare for those disabled people unable to work. Yet employment is an important area when we consider that securing ‘full employment’ among the general population was a key element in the classic welfare state settlement, and has been seen as a genuine and major achievement by scholars such as Lowe, Howard Glennerster and Robert Page.<sup>84</sup> For Sainsbury this concept of full employment was also supposed to extend to disabled people with work both a *right*, and an *obligation*, for anyone capable.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.; A. Holroyde, ‘Review Article: Jameel Hampton, Disability and the Welfare State in Britain: Changes in Perceptions and Policy’, *Social History of Medicine*, vol. 30, no. 3 (2017), pp. 704-706.

<sup>82</sup> Holroyde, ‘Review Article: Jameel Hampton, Disability and the Welfare State in Britain: Changes in Perceptions and Policy’; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*.

<sup>83</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*; Holroyde, ‘Review Article: Jameel Hampton, Disability and the Welfare State in Britain: Changes in Perceptions and Policy’.

<sup>84</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 80-1, 115-9; Page, *Revisiting the Welfare State*, p. 38; Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, pp. 267-8; Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, p. 5; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 241.

<sup>85</sup> Sainsbury, ‘Disabled People and the Personal Social Services’, p. 184.

There has been some consideration of disability employment in the twentieth century.<sup>86</sup> The Second World War is seen as a watershed moment in disability employment, with Anderson and Borsay arguing that the manpower shortage caused by the war led to the inclusion of disabled people in significant numbers in the workforce for the first time.<sup>87</sup> The DPEA itself included a range of provision alongside Remploy. The Act divided disabled people into two groups, those designated 'Section I', who were considered able to access open employment in some way, and those designated 'Section II', who, owing to the severity of their disability, were considered unable to do so, and therefore requiring sheltered employment. The majority of the measures of the DPEA were focused on those designated Section I, who were the majority of cases, including a list of reserved occupations, a mandatory quota system requiring that three per cent of an employers workforce, if they employed twenty or more people, be made up of disabled people, and the creation of a number of training and resettlement schemes.<sup>88</sup>

Scholars have differed on the impact of the DPEA. Anderson described it as a 'breakthrough' moment for disabled people, and argued that it 'undoubtedly had the best interests of disabled people at its core'.<sup>89</sup> For Bolderson, however, the negotiations which formed the Act had become informed by 'sectional interests',

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<sup>86</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 88-92; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, pp. 119-139; Bolderson, 'The Origins of the Disabled Persons employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance'; Meyer, 'Not Septimus Now'; Kowalsky, "This Honourable Obligation"; Mantin, 'Coalmining and the National Scheme for Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the First World War'.

<sup>87</sup> Anderson, 'Turned into Taxpayers', p. 468; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 8-11, 91; J. Anderson, 'British Women, Disability and the Second World War', *Contemporary British History*, vol. 20, no. 1 (2006), pp. 39-42; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, pp. 58-9, 133; Bolderson, 'The Origins of the Disabled Persons employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance'.

<sup>88</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 135.

<sup>89</sup> Anderson, 'British Women, Disability and the Second World War', p. 48; Anderson, 'Turned into Taxpayers', p. 470.

which were ‘detrimental to the interests of disabled people’.<sup>90</sup> Chiefly this was the input from employers and trade unions, who sought to ensure that the Act did not ‘upset their own interests in the labour market’.<sup>91</sup> A similar view was echoed by Thane, Borsay, and Hampton.<sup>92</sup> The measures of the DPEA remained in place throughout the period considered in this thesis.<sup>93</sup> The long-term success of the measures of the Act, with the exception of Remploy, have been seriously questioned. Bolderson, considering the outcome of the Act’s provision of an employment quota in 1980, judged that it had been largely unsuccessful in placing disabled people in open employment.<sup>94</sup> She suggested that this failure had been widely recognised for years, but that the principles enshrined in the Act were ‘difficult to discard’.<sup>95</sup> Borsay likewise suggested that the measures largely failed disabled people, with the quota in particular being a system which was never enforced and knowingly acted as a publicity stunt more than anything else.<sup>96</sup> As such, the measures of the DPEA are seen to have met with little real success, and yet as has been noted, this is not the assumption for Remploy.

The current view is therefore that disabled people were largely excluded from the welfare state, and did not reap the benefits of the ‘golden age’ of welfare or employment. With such limited work in the area undertaken by historians, there is

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<sup>90</sup> Bolderson, ‘The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance’, pp. 169-70.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 172, 181.

<sup>92</sup> Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, pp. 224-5; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, pp. 135-6; Hampton, ‘Discovering Disability’, p. 77.

<sup>93</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 135; Bolderson, ‘The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance’, pp. 171, 184; A. Roulstone and S. Prideaux, *Understanding Disability Policy* (Bristol, Policy Press, 2012), pp. 26-32.

<sup>94</sup> Bolderson, ‘The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance’, pp. 170-2.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 171, 184.

<sup>96</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, pp. 135-9, again it should be noted that the overall conclusions were already determined for Borsay.

much left to explore and add to our understanding. Remploy itself represents an important area of both welfare and employment and was one of the few examples of statutory provision for disabled people. A consideration of Remploy and sheltered employment is therefore a gap in the historiography which this thesis fills. As noted, the dominant view of Remploy as a catch-all employment scheme for ‘disabled’ or ‘severely disabled’ people, and as a humanitarian welfare provider in the period, runs contrary to the current understanding that disabled people were excluded from the welfare state and that the measures of the DPEA were unsuccessful in meeting their original aims. Whether Remploy and sheltered employment therefore present an exception to this, and indeed represent an area of provision for disabled people which reflected the ‘golden age’ of welfare and employment in the classic welfare state, forms a central element in this thesis.

### The Creation of the Welfare State

In undertaking this analysis, the case of Remploy and sheltered employment is used to provide a new area of understanding to consider the key areas of debate concerning the classic welfare state. One such debate concerns its creation, and centres upon the questions of whether the welfare state was brought on by changes wrought during the Second World War or as a result of longer-term trends, and how much of it was shaped by the Labour government elected in 1945.<sup>97</sup> This debate was sparked by the influential work of R. M. Titmuss, who argued that it was the unique and specific experience of the Second World War which turned welfare from the selectivity of the pre-war years to the statist universalism of the late 1940s.<sup>98</sup> This view has been subject to a range of criticism, with scholars such as Kenneth O. Morgan, Anne

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<sup>97</sup> Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 222.

<sup>98</sup> R.M. Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy* (London, HMSO and Longmans, 1950), p. 508.

Digby, David Gladstone, and Angus Calder questioning the social unity espoused by Titmuss.<sup>99</sup> The notion of the war instigating a popular will to create a welfare state has also been challenged by Lowe, Kathleen Jones, Steven Fielding, Peter Thompson and Nick Tiratsoo.<sup>100</sup> A number of historians have stressed the importance of longer-term pre-war developments. For Henry Pelling, while the war did spur improvements in several areas, social and political developments leading to the welfare state would likely have occurred without it.<sup>101</sup> Similarly for Calder, the war acted to move Britain along an already determined course, albeit slightly faster, rather than initiating a fundamental change.<sup>102</sup> More recently, historians have highlighted areas of continuity between pre- and post-war social provision, calling into question any discourse which suggests the Second World War represented a clean break in the history of welfare provision.<sup>103</sup>

Generally however, the debate reflects a range of variations rather than an entrenched dialectic. Titmuss' view remains on an extreme side of the scale, with historians taking positions along it in which the war has differing degrees of impact alongside other factors.<sup>104</sup> Arthur Marwick placed importance on the impact of the war which

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<sup>99</sup> Morgan, *The People's Peace*, p. 18; Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, pp. 54-55; Gladstone, 'The Welfare state and the State of Welfare', p. 3; A. Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz* (London, Pimlico, 1991); S. O. Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Wartime Britain 1939-1945* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 3.

<sup>100</sup> R. Lowe, 'The Second World War, Consensus, and the Foundation of the Welfare State', *Twentieth Century British History*, 1 (1990) quoted in Rose, *Which People's War?* p. 23; K. Jones, *The Making of Social Policy in Britain, 1830-1990 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (London, Athlone Press, 1994), p. 122; S. Fielding, Peter Thompson, and N. Tiratsoo, 'England Arise!': *The Labour Party and Popular Politics in 1940s Britain* (Manchester, 1995) in Rose, *Which People's War?* p. 23.

<sup>101</sup> H. Pelling, *Britain and the Second World War* (London, Collins, 1970).

<sup>102</sup> A. Calder, *The People's War: Britain 1939-1945* (London, Pimlico, 1969).

<sup>103</sup> F. K. Prochaska, *The Voluntary Impulse: Philanthropy in Modern Britain*, (London, Faber, 1988); P. Thane, 'Voluntary action in Britain since Beveridge', in M. Oppenheimer and N. Deakin (eds.) *Beveridge and voluntary action in Britain and the wider British world* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), pp. 121-34; Millward, 'Invalid definitions, invalid responses', p. 23; T. Alborn, 'Senses of belonging: The politics of working-class insurance in Britain, 1880-1914', *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 73, no.3 (2001), p. 567.

<sup>104</sup> Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, pp. 209-10.

disrupted the state and expedited the required social change.<sup>105</sup> Bernard Harris suggested that the practical changes to social policy necessitated by the war helped stimulate change afterwards.<sup>106</sup> Gordon Wright argued that the war suddenly levelled society, which when combined with pre-existing trends for reform, paved the way for the welfare state.<sup>107</sup> Fraser took a similar line in stressing the importance of the war in dramatically spurring on the development of state welfare.<sup>108</sup> Paul Addison, despite some reservations, likewise argued that the war did mark a turning point and sparked a desire for change in which the state organised home-front presented an attractive model.<sup>109</sup> Glennerster also noted that while social divisions remained, the war did provoke an ‘unusual readiness’ for change.<sup>110</sup> The Labour government which followed the war has also been considered important in shaping the welfare state. Morgan credits them as taking the key role in the birth of the welfare state.<sup>111</sup> For Jones, it was similarly Labour who took the lead both in coalition and in power.<sup>112</sup> Laybourn similarly suggested that the Labour government under Clement Attlee ‘offered its own distinctive contribution to the modern Welfare State that it forged’.<sup>113</sup> Most historians therefore, see the war as having had an impact, but not one divorced

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<sup>105</sup> A. Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War: War, Peace and Social Change 1900-1967* (Middlesex, Penguin, 1970).

<sup>106</sup> Harris, *The Origins of the British Welfare State*, p. 289.

<sup>107</sup> G. Wright, *The Ordeal of Total War, 1939-1945* (London, Harper & Row, 1968).

<sup>108</sup> Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, chapter 9.

<sup>109</sup> P. Addison, *The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War, Revised Edition* (London, Pimlico, 1994), pp. 13-14, 118, who does stress a lack of unity on the direction of reconstruction with Conservative caution at the cost. See also H.L. Smith, (ed.), *War and Social Change: British Society in the Second World War*, New Edition (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1990).

<sup>110</sup> Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, p. 4.

<sup>111</sup> K.O. Morgan, *Labour in Power 1945-51* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1984).

<sup>112</sup> Jones, *The Making of Social Policy in Britain 1830-1990*, p. 122

<sup>113</sup> Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, pp. 217-8.

from traditional social and political division, pre-1939 developments and continuing trends.<sup>114</sup>

Work in the field of disability history has tended to focus on the impact of war on disability and the two world wars in the twentieth century have provided a common focus for many historians. In most cases this has been the First World War,<sup>115</sup> though the Second World War<sup>116</sup> has also received some attention. Both are viewed as watershed moments in the history of disability.<sup>117</sup> That war is seen to be important in the development of disability policy rests on the increase in the disabled population that war ‘provides’, and in the political profile afforded those who become disabled in service to the nation.<sup>118</sup> War in general, and the two World Wars in particular, are therefore highlighted as important catalysts for developments in disability policy. As noted there is an enduring assumption that Remploy was created as a direct result of the Second World War, thereby seeming to support the original position espoused by Titmuss. In providing the first comprehensive analysis of the creation of the company,

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid., pp 209-10; T.H. Marshall, *Social Policy in the Twentieth-Century* (London, Hutchinson, 1975), pp. 84, 99; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 16-17; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 51.

<sup>115</sup> See for example, Gerber, (ed.) *Disabled Veterans in History*. A. Carden-Coyne, *Reconstructing the Body: Classicism, Modernism, and the First World War* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009); A. Carden-Coyne, ‘Ungrateful Bodies: Rehabilitation, Resistance and Disabled American Veterans of the First World War’, *European Review of History*, vol. 14, no. 4 (2007), pp. 543-65; Cohen, *The War Come Home*; S. Koven, ‘Remembering and dismemberment: crippled children, wounded soldiers and the Great War in Great Britain’, *American Historical Review*, vol. 99, no. 4, (1994), pp. 1167-202; Kowalsky, ‘This Honourable Obligation’; Kowalsky, ‘Enabling the Great War’; Meyer, ‘Not Septimus now’; J. Reznick, *Healing the Nation: Soldiers and the culture of caregiving in Britain during the Great War* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2005); E. Elsey, ‘Disabled Ex-servicemen’s Experiences of Rehabilitation and Employment After the First World War’, *Oral History*, vol. 25, no. 2 (1997), pp. 49-58; W. J. Gagen, ‘Remastering the Body, Renegotiating Gender: Physical Disability and Masculinity during the First World War, the case of J.B. Middlebrook’, *European Review of History*, vol. 14, no. 4 (2007), pp. 525-41; Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*.

<sup>116</sup> Anderson, ‘Turned into taxpayers’; Anderson, *Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*; Anderson, ‘British Women, Disability and the Second World War’; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*; Bernstein, ‘Rehabilitation Staged’; Kinder, ‘Lest We Forget’; Muir, ‘That bastard’s following me!’.

<sup>117</sup> Anderson, ‘British Women, Disability and the Second World War’; Anderson, *Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*.

<sup>118</sup> D. A. Gerber, ‘Introduction: Finding Disabled Veterans in History’, in D.A. Gerber (ed.) *Disabled Veterans in History* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2012), pp. 1-51.

this thesis therefore considers a previously ignored element of the welfare state in this debate in order to test the wider question of the impact of the war and other factors upon its creation.

### The Post-War Consensus

A further area of debate in terms of the welfare state, which has similarly not considered Rempoy, is the notion of a consensus in welfare and employment policy across the governments of the period, which suggests that there was little real difference in policy between Labour and Conservative governments until the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979.<sup>119</sup> Historians and political scientists have subjected this notion to review and a number of debates have arisen around the existence and nature of the so called 'post-war consensus'. The debate is generally considered to have begun with Addison's assertion that the experience of the Second World War gave rise to a centre-left consensus in politics and resulted in a post-war settlement centred on commitment to the welfare state, full employment and Keynesian economics.<sup>120</sup> Support for this view has come from David Dutton, Anthony Seldon, Dennis Kavanagh, Peter Morris, Bill Coxall, and Lynton Robins.<sup>121</sup> Jones also embraced this

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<sup>119</sup> As Harriet Jones notes, it is a term 'which has always been used more readily by political scientists than historians; the former are fonder of general models to describe behaviour, while the latter – especially in Britain – tend to be wary of such tidy explanations', H. Jones, 'Introduction', in H. Jones and M. Kandiah (eds.), *The Myth of Consensus: New Views on British History, 1945-64* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1996), p. xiii.

<sup>120</sup> P. Addison, *The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War*, (London, Cape, 1975); Addison later refined his interpretation of consensus as a 'Whitehall consensus', *The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War, Revised Edition* (London, Pimlico, 1994), p. 281; D. Fraser, 'The Postwar Consensus: A Debate Not Long Enough?', *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol. 53, no. 2 (2000), p. 347; Richard Toye notes that 'significant precursors to this notion were A. Marwick, 'Middle Opinion in the Thirties: Planning, Progress and Political 'Agreement'', *English Historical Review*, vol. 79, no. 311 (1964), pp. 285-98, and Calder, *The People's War*, see R. Toye, 'From "Consensus" to "Common Ground": The Rhetoric of the Postwar Settlement and its Collapse', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 48, no. 1 (2012), p. 5.

<sup>121</sup> D. Dutton, *British Politics Since 1945, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1997); D. Kavanagh and P. Morris, *Consensus Politics from Attlee to Major, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1994) ; A. Seldon, 'Consensus: A Debate Too Long?' , *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol. 47, no. 4 (1994), pp. 501-514; Coxall and Robins, *British Politics Since the War*, p. 49.



view, suggesting that for both Labour and Conservatives it was then taken for granted that governments should provide welfare services consisting of both universal services and special services for those who could not be self-supporting.<sup>122</sup>

Other scholars have criticised the very existence of such a consensus. Most notably, Ben Pimlott argued that ‘consensus is a mirage, an illusion that rapidly fades the closer one gets to it’.<sup>123</sup> Similar views were expressed by Nicholas Deakin, Harriet Jones, Michael Kandiah, and Neil Rollings amongst others.<sup>124</sup> For these scholars, the traditional adversarial party system continued unabated, with Labour and Conservatives representing ideological opposed positions and maintaining numerous differences on policy.<sup>125</sup> For Pimlott much of the support for the notion of consensus reflected the contemporary political views of those espousing its existence, specifically as an attack upon Thatcherism.<sup>126</sup> The validity of such criticism has itself been rightly called into question by Duncan Fraser, who noted that neither side can claim to be immune from a political stance, nor can any other historian.<sup>127</sup> Further areas of debate have arisen around the precise use of terms relating to consensus, the precise time when consensus ended, and the influence of factors beyond Whitehall.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Jones, *The Making of Social Policy in Britain 1830-1990*, pp. ix-x.

<sup>123</sup> B. Pimlott, ‘The Myth of Consensus’, in L.M. Smith (ed.), *The Making of Britain: Echoes of Greatness*, (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1988), p. 136.

<sup>124</sup> Jones and Kandiah, *The Myth of Consensus*, contains chapters from a range of historians which question the notion of consensus; N. Deakin, quoted in Fraser, ‘The Postwar Consensus’, p. 347; N. Rollings, ‘Poor Mr Butskell: A Short Life, Wrecked by Schizophrenia?’ *Twentieth Century British History*, vol. 5, no. 2 (1994), pp. 183-205. Other works taking a sceptical line towards consensus include: K. Jefferys, *The Churchill coalition and wartime politics, 1940-1945* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1991); S. Kelly, *The Myth of Mr. Butskell: The Politics of British Economic Policy, 1950-55* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2002).

<sup>125</sup> Fraser, ‘The Postwar Consensus’, p. 348.

<sup>126</sup> Pimlott, ‘Myth of Consensus’, p. 135; B. Pimlott, *Frustrate Their Knavish Tricks: Writings on Biography, History and Politics* (London, Harper Collins, 1994), pp. 229-39, quotation 238.

<sup>127</sup> Fraser, ‘The Postwar Consensus’, p. 349.

<sup>128</sup> For considerations of terminology see Seldon, ‘Consensus’, p. 508; Kavanagh and Morris, *Consensus Politics from Attlee to Major*, p. 13; Pimlott, ‘Myth of Consensus’, p. 130; Fraser, ‘The Postwar Consensus’, p. 349. For debate over when consensus ended see, B. Harrison, ‘The Rise, Fall and Rise of Political Consensus in Britain since 1940’, *History*, vol. 84, no. 274 (1999), pp. 301-24;

The crucial aspect considered in this thesis, however, is the fundamental notion of a consensus in the case of policy. Here, Richard Toye has recently suggested that historians would do well to move away from the traditional focus in this debate upon major policies such as housing, education and the NHS, and consider areas which have not yet been examined.<sup>129</sup> The case of Remploy is one such example. The traditional view has been that ‘disability’ was not ‘discovered’ as a political issue until the 1960s.<sup>130</sup> Considerations of disability policy in this debate have therefore been few and have been focused exclusively on welfare. For Millward, although a true ideological consensus did not exist, there was a ‘common response’ to disability policy during the period prior to Thatcher’s government and therefore a ‘consensus in action’.<sup>131</sup> Hampton, similarly saw consensus in government response, if not in ideological position, suggesting both Labour and Conservatives saw welfare provision for disabled people as an expense ‘and subject to a minimum standard of provision’.<sup>132</sup> As one of the few examples of statutory provision for disabled people, and as the central government sheltered employment scheme, Remploy represents a pertinent new area for examination in this debate.

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Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 237; Jones, *The Making of Social Policy in Britain 1830-1990*, pp. ix-x, 164-5; Fraser, ‘The Postwar Consensus’, pp. 355-6. For wider factors see, P. Dorey, *British Politics Since 1945* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1995), pp. 59-65; Fraser, ‘The Postwar Consensus’, pp. 59-61, 351-4; P. Dunleavy and C.T. Husbands, *British Democracy at the Crossroads: Voting and Party Competition in the 1980s* (London, Allen & Unwin, 1985); P. Dunleavy and B. O’Leary, *Theories of the State: The Politics of Liberal Democracy*, (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1987); D. Bell, *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties*, (London, Collier-Macmillan, 1962); S.M. Lipset, *Political Man*, (London, Mercury Books, 1963); K. Jefferys, *Retreat from the New Jerusalem, British Politics 1951-64* (London, Palgrave, 1997).

<sup>129</sup> Toye, ‘From “Consensus” to “Common Ground”’, p. 23.

<sup>130</sup> Hampton, ‘Discovering Disability’, pp. 70-1; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 8, 50; Sainsbury, ‘Disabled People and the Personal Social Services’, pp. 183-88; E. Younghusband, *Social Work in Britain: 1950-1975* (London, Allen and Unwin, 1978), pp. 210-11.

<sup>131</sup> Millward, ‘Invalid definitions, invalid responses’, pp. 165, 284.

<sup>132</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 244.

## Women in Welfare and Employment

It is not only disabled people who have been seen as having been largely excluded from the provisions of the classic welfare state, as this has also traditionally been seen to apply to women.<sup>133</sup> The post-war settlement began to come under serious criticism almost immediately for its differential treatment of men and women, and this grew in strength in the wake of 'second wave' feminism in the 1960s until the gender analysis of the welfare state became a major focus of the academic study of social policy in the 1980s.<sup>134</sup> The general focus here was on the examination of the structures of patriarchy revealed through the working of social policy.<sup>135</sup> By the mid 1990s, Gladstone noted it was 'impossible to evaluate the welfare state without understanding how it deals with women'.<sup>136</sup>

The primary criticism of the welfare state itself has been that the measures failed to emancipate women, and instead tended to reinforce their traditional role in society, with an underlying assumption that women should remain primarily care-givers to the family and economically reliant on a husband.<sup>137</sup> This has been referred to as the 'male breadwinner logic', with the assumption that it was the responsibility of the

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<sup>133</sup> Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, pp. 254-6; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 40-3.

<sup>134</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, p. 40; Gladstone, 'The welfare state and the state of welfare', p. 23; C. Pierson 'Theory in British Social Policy', in N. Ellison & C. Pierson (eds.) *Developments in British Social Policy* (London, Macmillan, 1998), p. 21; E. Wilson, *Women and the Welfare State* (London, Tavistock Publications, 1977), p. 170.

<sup>135</sup> Pierson 'Theory in British Social Policy', pp. 21-3.

<sup>136</sup> Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>137</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 40-3; Pierson 'Theory in British Social Policy', pp. 21-3; J. Stewart, 'The Twentieth Century: an Overview', in R. Page and R. Silburn (eds.) *British Social Welfare in the Twentieth Century* (London, Macmillan, 1999), pp. 19-21; Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, pp. 35-6; Brown, *The British Welfare State*, p. 53; P. Thane, 'Visions of Gender in the Making of the British Welfare State' in G. Bock and P. Thane (eds.), *Maternity and Gender Policies: Women and the Rise of the European Welfare States, 1880s-1950s* (London, Routledge, 1991), p. 93; C. Pierson, *Beyond the Welfare State?* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1991), pp. 69-79; R. Crompton and K. Sanderson, *Gendered Jobs & Social Change* (London, Unwin Hyman, 1990), pp. 49-50.

man to provide for his family.<sup>138</sup> There has since been some counter-balance to this view with recognition of women's agency in creating welfare states, and that the post-war settlement did confer some benefits to women, both directly – such as family allowances – and indirectly – such as measures regarding housing and health.<sup>139</sup> The fundamental assumption remains however that the welfare state did not treat men and women equally, with women neglected in its provision.<sup>140</sup>

The area of employment for women in the post-war period has also proved a pertinent area for study. The traditional assumption espoused by historians such as Marwick was that the Second World War facilitated a fundamental change in the lives of women in terms of work.<sup>141</sup> This is largely predicated on the increase in the number of women in employment during the war, which as Harold Smith illustrated saw an increase of almost fifty per cent between 1939 and 1943.<sup>142</sup> This narrative has since been complicated with historians such as Penny Summerfield, Sue Bruley, Hugh Pemberton and Gerry Holloway, highlighting how the increased role of women in

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<sup>138</sup> Stewart, 'The Twentieth Century'.

<sup>139</sup> H. Jones 'The State and Social Policy', in I. Zweiniger-Bargielowska (ed.), *Women in Twentieth-Century Britain* (London, Routledge, 2014), pp. 329-330; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 40-3; R. Lowe, 'Introduction: The Road from 1945', in H. Fawcett and R. Lowe (eds.) *Welfare Policy in Britain: The Road from 1945* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1999), pp. 10-11; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 6; P. Thane, 'Women in the British Labour Party and the construction of State welfare, 1906-39' in S. Koven and S. Michel (eds.), *Mothers of a new world: maternalist politics and the origins of welfare states* (London, Routledge, 1993), pp. 343-77; J. Lewis, 'Gender, the family and women's agency in the building of States: the British case', *Social History*, vol. 19, no. 1 (1994), pp. 37-55; T. Skocpol and G. Ritter, 'Gender and the origins of modern social policies in Britain and the United States', *Studies in American Political Development*, vol. 5, no. 1 (1991), pp. 36-93; S. Koven and S. Michel, 'Womanly duties: maternalist politics and the origins of welfare states in France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States, 1880-1920', *American Historical Review*, vol. 95, no. 4 (1990), pp. 1076-1108; J. Misra and F. Akins, 'The Welfare State and Women: Structure, Agency, and Diversity', *Social Politics*, vol. 5, no. 3 (1998), pp. 260-78.

<sup>140</sup> Page, *Revisiting the Welfare State*, p. 40; Gladstone, 'The welfare state and the state of welfare', p. 23; Deakin, *The Politics of Welfare: Continuities and Change* (London, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994), p. 4; Gladstone, *The Twentieth Century Welfare State*, pp. 6-7; Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, pp. 62-3; Pierson, *Beyond the Welfare State?*, pp. 69-79.

<sup>141</sup> A. Marwick, *War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century: a Comparative study of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the US* (London, Macmillan, 1974).

<sup>142</sup> H. L. Smith, 'The Effect of the War on the Status of Women', in H.L. Smith (ed.), *War and Social Change: British Society in the Second World War* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1986), p. 211.

work during the war was largely considered a temporary situation and did not necessarily lead to a long-term change.<sup>143</sup> Examinations of the period considered in this thesis have revealed a mixed picture. On the one hand there was a clear general increase in the numbers of women entering into employment over the period which could not but lead to change.<sup>144</sup> On the other hand, however, true equality in employment remained largely out of reach. There is agreement amongst scholars such as Lowe, Summerfield, Laybourn, Miriam Glucksmann, Jane Lewis, Gladstone, Thane, Holloway, and Bruley that women's employment in the period was typified by gender segregation, low-pay, inferior status, and a lack of opportunity for advancement.<sup>145</sup> Such studies have not considered whether this was the case for disabled women as well. This is important, for as Bruley has noted, women are not a 'homogenous group', and it is crucial that historians examine the various factors which 'mediated their experiences'.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> P. Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War: Production and Patriarchy in Conflict* (London, Routledge, 1984); G. Braybon and P. Summerfield, *Out of the Cage: Women's Experiences in Two World Wars* (Abingdon, Routledge, 2013); S. Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 1999); G. Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840* (London, Routledge, 2005), pp. 162-78; H. Pemberton, 'The Transformation of the Economy', in P. Addison and H. Jones (eds.) *A Companion to Contemporary Britain 1939-2000* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2005), pp. 190-1.

<sup>144</sup> Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War*; M. Pugh, *Women and the Women's movement in Britain 1914-1959* (London, Macmillan, 1992); Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 119; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, pp. 99-119.

<sup>145</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 42-3; K. Laybourn, *Unemployment and Employment Policies Concerning Women in Britain, 1900-1951* (Lampeter, Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), p. 187; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, pp. 99-119; Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War*; M. Glucksmann, *Women Assemble: Women Workers and the New Industries in Inter-War Britain* (London, Routledge, 1990), p. 281; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 119-122; Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, p. 186; P. Thane, 'Towards Equal Opportunities? Women in Britain since 1945', in T. Gourvish and A. O'Day (eds.), *Britain Since 1945* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1991), pp. 183-208; J. Lewis, *Women in Britain Since 1945: Women, Family, Work and the State in the Post-War Years* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1992), pp. 78-91; J. Lewis, *Women in England 1870-1950: Sexual Divisions and Social Change* (Brighton, Wheatsheaf Books Ltd, 1984); H. Bradley, *Men's Work, Women's Work* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1989), p. 116.

<sup>146</sup> Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, p. 93.

Though gender has long been a central element in the field of disability studies, there has been relatively little consideration of women in disability history.<sup>147</sup> What research has been done with regards to the welfare state, suggests that disabled women were also neglected compared to disabled men. Anderson suggested that disabled women faced a more difficult post-war climate than disabled men generally, with areas such as transport, accommodation and welfare payments favouring the latter.<sup>148</sup> Millward similarly argued that women were discriminated against in disability welfare.<sup>149</sup> Hampton also suggested that welfare provision differed ‘according to sex’, with women suffering an ‘absence of provision in cash and services under the post-war settlement’.<sup>150</sup> The result is that in the area of welfare, disabled women are seen as a group who experienced a particular neglect, as both women and disabled people, or what Oliver termed a ‘double disability’.<sup>151</sup>

In terms of employment, Borsay suggested that the suspension of gender roles during the Second World War, which allowed women to enter the employment market generally, did not necessarily extend to disabled women.<sup>152</sup> The chief work in this area was done by Anderson, who focused on disabled women during the Second World War and into its immediate aftermath.<sup>153</sup> For Anderson, while the wartime labour shortage had allowed some disabled women to enter the labour market, including into industry and thereby prove their worth and gain a measure of ‘personal

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<sup>147</sup> B. Gleeson, *Geographies of Disability* (London, Routledge, 1999), p. 17.

<sup>148</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 168; Anderson, ‘British Women, Disability and the Second World War’.

<sup>149</sup> Millward, ‘Social Security Policy and the Early Disability Movement’, pp. 281-2.

<sup>150</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 119.

<sup>151</sup> Oliver, *The Politics of Disablement*, p. 70.

<sup>152</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 134.

<sup>153</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 152-175; Anderson, ‘British Women, Disability and the Second World War’, pp. 37-53.

independence', this was neither universal nor permanent.<sup>154</sup> Disabled women in the post-war period were thus left struggling to find employment and experiencing a training and work environment which was 'gendered and segregated'.<sup>155</sup> Thane also suggested that the DPEA itself overlooked the needs of disabled women.<sup>156</sup> Both Hampton and Sainsbury likewise argued that disability services associated with employment 'were allocated overwhelmingly to men'.<sup>157</sup>

As mentioned, the case of the inclusion of women in Remploy is an important area to address in understanding the company. It is also clearly a relevant case to examine in terms of considering the relative exclusion of women from the measures of the welfare state and their inferior status in employment. A study of Remploy is therefore ideally placed to consider the experiences of disabled women, both in terms of access to this provision and the employment conditions they faced.

### The Mixed Economy and Moving Frontier of the State

With the creation of the measures which comprised the welfare state, the extent of the expanding role of the state and its effect on the traditional provision of welfare by voluntary / charitable organisations has remained an important focus for scholars.<sup>158</sup> The traditional view was that the expansion of statutory welfare in the 1940s left voluntarism redundant until it experienced something of a resurgence in the mid-to-late-1960s.<sup>159</sup> Thus the Wolfenden Report on voluntary organisations in 1978 described the intervening period as one in which the voluntary sector was left

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<sup>154</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 158-9, 154-5, 168-9, 170-1.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., pp. 169-70; Anderson, 'British Women, Disability and the Second World War', p. 50.

<sup>156</sup> Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, pp. 224-5.

<sup>157</sup> Sainsbury, 'Disabled People and the Personal Social Services', p. 188; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 119.

<sup>158</sup> The terms 'charitable' and 'voluntary' are used here interchangeably.

<sup>159</sup> Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 66.

‘marking time’.<sup>160</sup> Barry Knight went further and suggested that voluntarism was effectively ‘moribund’.<sup>161</sup> This was occasionally highlighted in contemporary opinion in terms of the so called ‘welfare escalator’, with the inexorable rise of state responsibility for welfare provision culminating in the creation of the welfare state.<sup>162</sup> This ‘whiggish’ view of the steady evolution of statutory welfare in Britain has since been forcefully challenged, with scholars such as Geoffrey Finlayson, Eileen Younghusband, Marilyn Taylor, Frank Prochaska, Pat Thane, Jeremy Kendall and Martin Knapp, noting the survival of the voluntary sector.<sup>163</sup> The result has been the current acceptance of the existence of a ‘mixed economy of welfare’, with a combination of statutory and voluntary provision during the period of the classic welfare state, followed by a radical shift in the climate under the subsequent Thatcher government.<sup>164</sup>

This is not to suggest that the increase in statutory provision had no effect on the charitable sector and it is widely accepted that voluntary provision became a ‘junior partner in the welfare firm’.<sup>165</sup> Anne Digby described voluntary activity as ‘a minor supplement of public provision’.<sup>166</sup> Kendall and Knapp similarly argued that the state ‘was firmly entrenched as the “senior partner” in formal social welfare provision’.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> *The Future of Voluntary Organisations: Report of the Wolfenden Committee* (London, Croom Helm, 1978).

<sup>161</sup> B. Knight, *Voluntary Action* (London, Centris 1993).

<sup>162</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*; M. Bruce, *The Coming of the Welfare State* (London, Harper Collins, 1971); G Kitson-Clark, *An Expanding Society: Britain 1830-1900* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1967).

<sup>163</sup> Finlayson, *Citizen, State and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990*; Younghusband, *Social Work in Britain*; M. Taylor, ‘Voluntary action and the state’, in D. Gladstone, (ed.) *British Social Welfare: Past, Present and Future* (London, UCL Press, 1995), p. 215; Prochaska, *The Voluntary Impulse*; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, p. 277; J. Kendall and M. Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 51-57.

<sup>164</sup> Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 133-9.

<sup>165</sup> D. Owen, *English Philanthropy: 1660-1960* (London, Belknap Press, 1964), p. 527; Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-57.

<sup>166</sup> Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, p. 89.

<sup>167</sup> Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 133-9.



This expansion of the state in welfare to be the dominant force was neither complete nor steady, and it has been suggested that state involvement represented a ‘moving frontier’, with a changing relationship with non-statutory providers over the period examined in this thesis.<sup>168</sup> Finlayson explained that there was a ‘constant interrelationship between voluntarism, in its various guises, and the state in British social welfare....Within the mixed economy of welfare, voluntary impinged on statutory, statutory on voluntary; and this was an enduring process...there was, more often than not, a continuous, if also a varied, relationship between voluntarism and the state within the mixed economy’.<sup>169</sup> This was also noted by Kendall and Knapp, who considered that the state continuously looked for ‘new ways of working with the voluntary sector’.<sup>170</sup> Alongside this was the expansion of the role of Local Authorities (LAs) in delivering welfare, which moved into increasing partnership with voluntary organisations to provide services.<sup>171</sup> Examination of this moving frontier has been noted as requiring further work, with both Julie Grier and Hampton calling for a more nuanced examination of the mixed economy, which more properly examines the complex and changing relationships between the various parties involved.<sup>172</sup>

The non-statutory sector has been considered particularly important for the study of disability.<sup>173</sup> As Younghusband illustrated, hundreds of voluntary organisations, large and small, national and local, contributed welfare services for disabled men, women and children, including accommodation, medical support, holidays, clubs, and

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<sup>168</sup> G. Finlayson, ‘A Moving Frontier: Voluntarism and the State in British Social Welfare 1911-1949’, *Twentieth Century British History*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1990), pp. 183-206.

<sup>169</sup> Finlayson, *Citizen, State and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>170</sup> Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-57.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>172</sup> J. Grier, ‘Voluntary Rights and Statutory Wrongs: The Case of Child Migration, 1948-67’, *History of Education*, vol. 31 no. 3 (2002), pp. 263-4; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 8.

<sup>173</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 8; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 66.

education.<sup>174</sup> The importance placed upon consideration of the voluntary sector in disability history is due to the belief that the state made only limited attempts to expand into the provision of statutory welfare for disabled people.<sup>175</sup> In his recent study, Hampton concluded that the period saw ‘a major change in opinion about the appropriate place of disabled people within the mixed economy’, with the view developing that the state should provide ‘a significant portion of their welfare’ developing only in the mid-1970s.<sup>176</sup> Such research has focused on non-employment welfare and on the creation of campaigning groups for various causes around disability in the 1960s, such as the Disablement Income Group (DIG), the Disability Alliance (DA), the Spastics Society, and the National Association for Mental Health (MIND).<sup>177</sup>

Given that much of welfare for disabled people during this period was of the non-statutory kind, it is important to consider what this position was for sheltered employment.<sup>178</sup> As previously mentioned, Remploy is typically the only example of sheltered employment noted, with no detailed consideration of what other provision was available having been made. This thesis therefore illuminates the wider field of sheltered employment to consider whether a mixed economy existed. Furthermore, given Remploy’s place as the central government provider, representing the ‘frontier’ in sheltered employment, it is possible to use the company to examine a previously

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<sup>174</sup> Younghusband, *Social Work in Britain*, pp. 261-3.

<sup>175</sup> Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, p. 91; Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-7; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*; M. Brenton, *The Voluntary Sector in British Social Services* (Harlow, Prentice Hall Press, 1985).

<sup>176</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 240-1

<sup>177</sup> Millward, ‘Invalid definitions, invalid responses’, p. 22; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*.

<sup>178</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 56.

unexplored set of relationships between the various providers of welfare and employment services in the period, and thereby add to our understanding of this area.

### Timeframe and Terminology

The precise point the classic welfare state began has variously been stated as 1944,<sup>179</sup> with the passing of social service legislation such as the Education Act; 1945,<sup>180</sup> with the close of the war in Europe and the election of the Labour Government; or 1948,<sup>181</sup> as major provision such as the NHS became operative. In this thesis the start of the classic welfare state is taken as 1944, the year Remploy was created as part of the DPEA and in order to encapsulate all potential aspects, and given the prevailing assumption that it was not until the Thatcher government that the end of the ‘golden age’ of Remploy and sheltered employment occurred, it takes the period through to 1979. Though this is the period which focuses the analysis, in consideration of the origins of Remploy in Chapter Two, some attention is given to pre-1944 developments.

Precise definitions of ‘disability’ can be problematic, both in terms of accuracy and acceptability. In this thesis I adopt the approach of Millward in his recent PhD thesis, in taking a ‘bureaucratic’ definition of disability.<sup>182</sup> As such the use of terms such as ‘disability’, ‘disabled people’, ‘severely disabled people’, ‘Section I and II disabled people’, ‘fit people’, ‘mentally disabled people’ and ‘sighted people’ solely reflect the

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<sup>179</sup> Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 32, 73; Gladstone ‘The welfare state and the state of welfare’, p. 2.

<sup>180</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, p. 77; Hill, *The Welfare State in Britain*, p. 11.

<sup>181</sup> N. Johnson, *The Welfare State in Transition: The Theory and Practice of Welfare Pluralism* (Amherst, The University of Massachusetts Press, 1987), p. 4; M. Jones and R. Lowe, *From Beveridge to Blair: The first fifty years of Britain’s welfare state, 1948-98* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2002), p. 3.

<sup>182</sup> Millward, ‘Invalid definitions, invalid responses’, pp. 43-9.

bureaucratic categories applied to people during the period in determining eligibility for sheltered employment, and are not intended to reflect lived experience or personal/group identity.<sup>183</sup> Similarly, the use of the term ‘sheltered employment’, as opposed to ‘segregated employment’, reflects the term given to this form of provision in the period. This thesis also includes occasional instances of use of what is now considered derogatory language in direct quotation from primary sources. This is done purely in the interests of historical accuracy in order to reflect the nomenclature of the period and is not intended to condone any current use of such terms.

Remploy itself was initially called ‘The Disabled Persons Employment Corporation’, with its factories referred to as ‘British Factories’. The name Remploy was in use from 1946 and officially adopted in 1949, though reference to the ‘Corporation’ continued for some years after this. In the interests of clarity the term ‘Remploy’ is used throughout this thesis, with the exception of direct quotation. In terms of government departments, the key one in relation to this thesis is the Ministry of Labour and National Service, which became the Ministry of Labour in 1959, the Department of Employment and Productivity in 1968, and the Department of Employment in 1970. Again in the interests of clarity, the terms used in this thesis to refer to this department are the Ministry of Labour (MOL) until 1968, and the Department of Employment (DE) thereafter.

### Sources and Approach

This thesis takes an empirical approach using archival material to consider the development of Remploy and sheltered employment. The focus on Remploy was

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

determined both in terms of its place as the key statutory provider of sheltered employment and, more practically, by the availability of archival source material, which this thesis has examined for the first time. Contrary to the traditional belief that disability is absent from the archives, there exists an abundance of source material concerning disabled people.<sup>184</sup> In the case of Remploy, the majority of source material is held by The National Archives, Kew, referenced as 'BM'. This includes a wide range of records from the company itself, such as annual accounts, internal reports, correspondence, and the minutes and papers of the Board of Directors. In addition to these records are those compiled in relation to Remploy by various government departments, most notably the MOL. Such material is particularly abundant for the period considered here, and far more than could feasibly be considered in a single PhD study. There is certainly ample material for further consideration by historians.

In addition to this, use has been made of material from Remploy itself. Undertaken as part of the *Heritage Consortium* PhD programme, this thesis was produced alongside a *Postgraduate Certificate in Heritage Research* which entailed the completion of a placement with a partner organisation. Given the focus of this study, a placement with Remploy itself was the obvious choice and was agreed with the company. One element of this involved the development of a heritage project. As part of this working relationship I was provided with access to all remaining archival material held by Remploy. For the purpose of this thesis, the primary resource here was the large collection of issues of *Remploy News*, a regular newsletter produced by the company from 1952, providing information on developments in the company and on individual factories. In addition to such material, this thesis also makes use of a range

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<sup>184</sup> J. Campbell and M. Oliver, *Disability Politics: Understanding Our Past, Changing Our Future* (London, Routledge, 1996), p. 17; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 6.

of other sources including legislation, parliamentary committee reports and papers, and local and national press coverage. Remploy was also one of the chief topics of discussion concerning disability in the House of Commons during the period and extensive use is made of *Hansard* to understand policy and areas of political debate.

Though this thesis is focused primarily on the central government's Remploy scheme, there is consideration, particularly in Chapter Six, of the alternative providers of sheltered employment. Unfortunately, sheltered employment beyond Remploy, such as that provided by voluntary organisations, has much less presence in the archive, reflecting the disparate nature of such provision. This is not an issue unique to this thesis as the study of any non-statutory group is particularly challenging for historians. As Thane stated, voluntarism 'does not survive in official records as state action does'.<sup>185</sup> Finlayson likewise noted that attempting to provide a comprehensive account of the extent of voluntarism 'is impossible'.<sup>186</sup> Instead he suggested that 'all that can be done is to provide exemplar material'.<sup>187</sup> This is equally the case here. There are few records from the sheltered workshops themselves; the reliance is instead on government records, particularly those of the MOL, the National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled (NACED), which was established to oversee the enacting of the provisions of the DPEA, and of Remploy themselves. It is apparent when examining the evidence of such sheltered employment that contradictory evidence abounds, even in some cases within one document, which reflects the diverse and fragmentary nature of voluntary provision. Such information can usually only indicate the 'approved' sheltered employment schemes and how many were operating informally cannot be known.

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<sup>185</sup> Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, p. 277.

<sup>186</sup> Finlayson, *Citizen, State and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990*, p. 327.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*

This thesis is also limited to exploring what was accepted at the time by governments and officials as constituting ‘sheltered employment’ comparable with Remploy. This did not include some cases where disabled people were incorporated into enclaves in open industry. Perhaps the most notable example of such schemes were the Grenfell Factories in Wales, which were offered some financial incentives, such as a reduction in rent, for employing a proportion of disabled people in their workforce.<sup>188</sup> These were still considered competitive ‘open employment’ factories, however, and not as sheltered workshops *per se*.<sup>189</sup> Similarly, this thesis contains only limited reference to sheltered employment for the blind. Consideration of the experiences of blind people has formed its own field in disability history, reflecting the distinct development of exclusive welfare services for this group.<sup>190</sup> Sheltered employment was one such service and was similarly demarcated by officials at the time from the general provision. There was some overlap in this area, however, which is referenced where relevant. The focus in this thesis is therefore on the field of sheltered employment for severely disabled people as it was understood and referred to during the period examined.

This study is firmly in the discipline of history, and seeks to understand Remploy and sheltered employment in the context of the classic welfare state. In doing so, I make no judgement on sheltered employment as a concept. Sheltered employment has long been controversial, and remains so in many parts of the world where it is still

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<sup>188</sup> TNA BD 40, Welsh Office: Economic Planning Division, ‘Note on Matters arising out of Welsh Debate’ (23.10.1962).

<sup>189</sup> TNA BD 40, Welsh Office: Economic Planning Division, ‘Note on MOL’ (03.04.1963); MOL, ‘Note to Welsh Office’ (15.02.1963). They were also seen to have met with little success, TNA BD 40, MOL, ‘Note to Welsh Office’ (15.02.1963).

<sup>190</sup> Reiss, *Blind Workers against Charity*, pp. 152-6.

widespread.<sup>191</sup> For some, it is inherently about segregation and is inferior to the attainment of work in an inclusive mainstream employment environment.<sup>192</sup> For others, it represents a better prospect for work and fulfilment than the possibility of unemployment in a competitive market.<sup>193</sup> It is not the intention of this thesis to enter into this debate by suggesting sheltered employment was either ‘good’ or ‘bad’. The intention is simply to place Remploy and sheltered employment in their historical context to better understand how they functioned at the time. Any contribution to this debate is in terms of correcting misconceptions about the past and providing a better understanding of historical developments in disability policy within their own context.

### Thesis Outline

This thesis is structured thematically, with each chapter considering a fundamental area of understanding of Remploy in need of examination and focusing upon the corresponding area of debate in terms of the welfare state.

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<sup>191</sup> Brindle, ‘Remploy factories shut up shop – the end of an era for disabled workers’, *The Guardian* (30.10.2013), <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2013/oct/30/remploy-factories-close-disabled-workers> (accessed 02/07/2018); Marshal, ‘Workers mourn end of an era as last Remploy factories close’, *ITV News* (31.10.2013), <http://www.itv.com/news/2013-10-30/workers-mourn-end-of-an-era-as-last-remploy-factories-close/> (accessed 02/07/2018); Brindle, ‘Charity heads support plans to close Remploy factories’, *The Guardian* (19.05.2007), <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2007/may/19/disability.socialcare> (accessed 02/07/2018); Brindle, ‘Remploy factory closures to put 1,700 disabled people out of work’, *The Guardian* (07.03.2012), <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2012/mar/07/remploy-factory-closures-disabled-workers> (accessed 02/07/2018); Clements, ‘On the scrapheap: Remploy workers’ Struggles five years on’, *STV News* (27.11.2017), <https://stv.tv/news/features/1403128-remploy-five-years-on/> (accessed 02/07/2018); White, ‘The Remploy factories have closed, but the pain continues’, *New Statesman* (16.05.2013), <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2013/05/remploy-factories-have-closed-pain-continues> (accessed 02/07/2018); Disability Rights UK, *Remploy Statement* (undated), <https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/policy-campaigns/careers/remploy-statement> (accessed 02/07/2018).

<sup>192</sup> Brindle, ‘Charity heads support plans to close Remploy factories’, *The Guardian* (19.05.2007), <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2007/may/19/disability.socialcare> (accessed 02/07/2018); Disability Rights UK, *Remploy Statement* (undated), <https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/policy-campaigns/careers/remploy-statement> (accessed 02/07/2018).

<sup>193</sup> Marshal, ‘Workers mourn end of an era as last Remploy factories close’, *ITV News* (31.10.2013), <http://www.itv.com/news/2013-10-30/workers-mourn-end-of-an-era-as-last-remploy-factories-close/> (accessed 02/07/2018).



Chapter Two considers the creation of Remploy in the DPEA alongside the wider debate about the creation of the welfare state. Remploy has rarely been considered beyond being part of the wider measures of the Act, but this chapter argues that the sheltered employment scheme had its own distinct development. Longer-term policy developments during the inter-war period are considered alongside the impact of the Second World War itself, and close examination is made of the short-term political processes which formed the DPEA. Existing explanations for the creation of Remploy are challenged with particular attention paid to the influential interpretation proposed by Bolderson that Remploy was created to placate industry. The chapter argues that Remploy, whilst owing something to pre-war developments and ideas, and the impetus of the Second World War, was driven through primarily by the efforts of the war-time Minister of Labour, Ernest Bevin. Importantly, however, it demonstrates that Remploy was not created with a pre-determined agenda, leaving fundamental aspects of its purpose and function unresolved as it began to operate in 1945.

Chapter Three takes up this final point to consider the development of the fundamental purpose of Remploy across the period examined in this thesis. It does so firstly through exploring the central policy negotiated between successive governments and the Remploy Board of Directors. As well as clarifying the understood purpose of Remploy in the period, this chapter considers the implications of this for the debate over the existence of a post-war consensus, by considering the extent to which the two main political parties agreed on policy regarding the company. This chapter demonstrates that Remploy's function was initially contested, but a consensus eventually formed in a link between the company's scope and its commercial performance which challenges the dominant narrative of Remploy as a

purely humanitarian concern during this period. The chapter then expands this analysis to consider the extent to which policy was reflected at the local factory level, testing the assumption that Remploy operated as a coherent and uniform scheme.

The thesis then moves on to consider Remploy's disabled workforce across two chapters. Chapter Four focuses upon the composition of the workforce and addresses the question of who was being employed by Remploy and the basis upon which this occurred. In providing the first analysis of the workforce, this chapter challenges all existing conceptions of this, particularly the notion of Remploy as either a catch-all service for all severely disabled people, or as one primarily reserved for disabled ex-service personnel. It highlights the various barriers which prevented many disabled people from gaining work with Remploy and argues that the key factor in gaining and maintaining employment with the company was individual productivity necessitated by the emphasis on commercial efficiency. This chapter highlights both central recruitment policy over the period and the local variations in practice which left thousands of disabled people unable to gain entry into Remploy. In so doing the chapter adds Remploy to the current understanding of the exclusion of disabled people from the measures of the welfare state and argues that the achievement of full employment in the period was not extended to those designated Section II.

Chapter Five then explores the specific case of women in Remploy and thereby adds the case of the company to the wider understanding of women in welfare and employment during the period. In terms of the former, the chapter considers the number of women employed by the company and the factors which may have prevented them from doing so, in order to determine if the relative exclusion of

women from the provisions of the welfare state also extended to Remploy. It then considers the case of Remploy in terms of the current understanding of women's employment in the period as one characterised by segregation, low-pay, low-status and limited advancement. It therefore highlights where the experiences of disabled women conformed to this general pattern and where the particularities of Remploy mitigated these factors.

Chapter Six considers the wider field of sheltered employment provision beyond Remploy. It clarifies the current conception of Remploy as the only meaningful provider, and reveals the existence and extent of a mixed economy in sheltered employment for the first time. This analysis is framed around Remploy's place as the frontier of the state, with the chapter examining the movement of this frontier across three distinct periods. The chapter demonstrates the existence of a mixed economy across the period with a moving frontier of the state, and argues that this failed to operate together as a cohesive system, with wide local variation in provision apparent.

Collectively then, this thesis illuminates the fundamental aspects of Remploy and sheltered employment for the first time, thereby challenging the notion of a 'golden age' of Remploy in the period as a coherent, catch-all, humanitarian scheme, and adds this new perspective to the current understanding of disability and the classic welfare state.

## **Chapter Two**

### **The Creation of Remploy**

Remploy was created as one element of the DPEA in 1944. A landmark piece of legislation, the DPEA encapsulated a number of measures for the training and employment of disabled people. The majority of these were designed to assist the incorporation of those disabled people deemed capable, designated as Section I people, into open employment, with Remploy established to provide sheltered employment for those too severely disabled to do so, designated as Section II. Typically, considerations of the creation of the DPEA have tended to focus on those measures for Section I people over the creation of Remploy, with the company simply identified as one aspect of the Act.<sup>1</sup> The assumption is therefore of a singular development of the measures encapsulated in the DPEA. By focusing on the development of Remploy specifically, this chapter will consider whether it had its own distinct development, and will thereby provide the first comprehensive analysis of the creation of the company.

In terms of the current understanding of Remploy, there are a number of areas this chapter will seek to explore and clarify. The popular viewpoint is that Remploy was created as a direct consequence of the Second World War.<sup>2</sup> This has also been the

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<sup>1</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*; Bolderson, 'The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance'; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 168; Reiss, *Blind Workers Against Charity*, pp. 138-41; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 183-5; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, pp. 224-5; Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain*, p. 237; Lonsdale, *Work and Inequality*, p. 120; Shah and Priestley, *Disability and Social Change*, pp. 121-2; Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, pp. 71-2; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 55; Hyde, 'Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s', p. 200.

<sup>2</sup> 'Who we are', *Remploy* (2017),

[http://www.remploy.co.uk/info/20124/find\\_out\\_more/72/who\\_we\\_are](http://www.remploy.co.uk/info/20124/find_out_more/72/who_we_are) (accessed 27/06/2017).

'Remploy's Journey', *Remploy* (2017)

view proposed by a number of academics, including historians such as Reiss and Anderson.<sup>3</sup> Wars in general, and the two World Wars of the twentieth-century in particular, have provided a common focus for studies in disability history and are thereby considered important drivers of disability policy. The Second World War has been described as a watershed moment, particularly in terms of disability employment owing to the manpower shortage created by the war and evidenced by the passing of the DPEA itself.<sup>4</sup> This issue also represents an aspect of the debate over the factors which led to the establishment of the welfare state. Though Remploy has not been considered as part of this debate until now, in terms of the current orthodoxy it appears to sit at the extreme end of the scale in supporting Titmuss' view of the unique and specific experience of the Second World War leading to the creation of the measures of the welfare state.<sup>5</sup> The majority of historians, however, have highlighted the importance of considering the war alongside longer-term developments in policy and the role of Labour politicians in both coalition and majority governments.<sup>6</sup> The

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[http://www.remploy.co.uk/downloads/file/141/remloys\\_journeypdf](http://www.remploy.co.uk/downloads/file/141/remloys_journeypdf) (accessed 27/06/2017).

Fox, 'What are Remploy workers doing now?', *BBC News* (31.11.2014), <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-29843567> (accessed 27/06/2017); Beattie, 'Hundreds of axed disabled workers still jobless TWO years after Remploy factory closures', *Mirror* (05.01.2015), <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/hundreds-axed-disabled-workers-still-4919835> (accessed 27/06/2017); 'Remploy's history as specialist disabled employer remembered as final factories close', *ITV Report*, (31.10.2013), <http://www.itv.com/news/2013-10-31/final-remploy-factory-closes/> (accessed 27/06/2017); Historic England, 'Disability History: Disability, Rehabilitation and Work' (2017), <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/disability-history/1945-to-the-present-day/disability-rehabilitation-and-work/> (accessed 11/08/2017).

<sup>3</sup> Reiss, *Blind Workers Against Charity*, p. 140; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 183-5; Anderson, 'Turned into Taxpayers', p. 469; Elsey, 'The Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the Two World Wars', pp. 276-7; Oliver, *The Politics of Disablement*, pp. 88-9; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 168; Hyde, 'Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s', pp. 199-215; Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain*, p. 237; Jeffries, 'The Remploy Resource', p. 7; Kochan, 'Remploy: disabled and thriving', p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 135; Anderson, 'British Women, Disability and the Second World War', p. 48; Anderson, 'Turned into Taxpayers', p. 470; Anderson, *Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*.

<sup>5</sup> Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy*, p. 508.

<sup>6</sup> Pelling, *Britain and the Second World War*; Calder, *The People's War*; Prochaska, *The Voluntary Impulse*; Thane, 'Voluntary action in Britain since Beveridge', pp. 121-34; Millward, 'Invalid definitions, invalid responses', p. 23; Alborn, 'Senses of belonging', p. 567; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, pp. 209-10; Harris, *The Origins of the British Welfare State*, p. 289; Wright, *The Ordeal of Total War, 1939-1945*; Fraser, *The Evolution of the British*

Minister of Labour in Winston Churchill's war-time coalition government, Ernest Bevin, universally recognised by both contemporaries and later scholars as having played a central role in the formation and passing of the DPEA, was himself adamant that it was not the war which was responsible for the measures contained in the Act, but long experience of the employment problems faced by disabled people.<sup>7</sup> This chapter will therefore explore the factors which led to the creation of Remploy for the first time, through consideration of the state of sheltered employment prior to the Second World War, the impact of the war itself, and a close examination of its development through the formation of the DPEA.

The most detailed interpretation of Remploy's creation remains that proposed by Bolderson, subsequently adopted by Borsay, Humphries and Gordon, which sees the creation of the company as being a result of a bargain with industry to gain approval for the other measures of the DPEA, by segregating those non-productive disabled workers into the scheme.<sup>8</sup> This influential interpretation clearly requires serious consideration as it creates a negative image of the scheme and sheltered employment generally as being based purely upon segregation and discrimination. This chapter will therefore provide a detailed examination of this case specifically, in order to determine its validity in explaining Remploy's creation.

A common assumption across all references to the creation of Remploy is that it appeared as a fully-formed, coherent company, with a determined objective and

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*Welfare State*; Addison, *The Road to 1945*, pp. 13-4; Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, p. 4; Morgan, *Labour in Power 1945-51*; Jones, *The Making of Social Policy in Britain 1830-1990*, p. 122; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 16-17; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 51.

<sup>7</sup> Mr. Ernest Bevin, *Hansard*, 395, col. 1349 (10.12.1943).

<sup>8</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 109-110; Humphries and Gordon, *Out of Sight*, p. 138; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy In Britain Since 1750*.

*modus operandi* as it began to operate.<sup>9</sup> By examining the development of the company prior to the first meeting of the Board of Directors on 30 May 1945, this chapter will consider whether this was indeed the case and the degree to which Remploy was established with a pre-determined agenda.

To explore the developments which led to the creation of Remploy, this chapter will initially expand the chronological focus of this thesis to consider the provision of sheltered employment in the inter-war period, in order to determine the existence of any notion of such a scheme prior to the Second World War. Following this, the impact of the war itself will be considered. The chapter will then turn to a detailed examination of the development of what would become Remploy through the formation and passage of the DPEA. This will begin with consideration of the discussions across the various committees involved and in Parliament, which are seen as having led to the creation of the DPEA and therefore Remploy. This will be followed by a detailed analysis of the case made by Bolderson that it was industry that had the greatest input upon the scheme, and will conclude with examination of the particular role of Bevin himself. The final section will then consider the extent to which Remploy began to operate with a fully-defined purpose already in place. In so doing this chapter will reveal the specific developments behind the creation of Remploy, thereby providing the first comprehensive analysis of its formation, and add the case of Remploy to the wider debate on the factors which led to the creation of the welfare state.

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<sup>9</sup> See for example, Hampton, 'Discovering Disability', p. 77; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 183-5; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 55-6; Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 71; Shah and Priestley, *Disability and Social Change*, pp. 139-40; Lonsdale, *Work and Inequality*, p. 137; Bolderson, 'The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance', p. 178.

### Inter-war Developments in Sheltered Employment, 1918-1939

While some attention has been paid to developments in disability policy and employment in the inter-war period, there has been only limited reference in this to sheltered employment provision for the severely disabled, which will be examined here in greater detail. Prior to the First World War, scant provision for disabled people was made through a combination of outdoor and indoor relief, with employment reliant on very limited philanthropic endeavours.<sup>10</sup> Following the end of the war, with some twenty million men wounded, and eight million permanently disabled, the question of how to reintegrate these people back into society was a challenge for states throughout Europe.<sup>11</sup> Thus in Britain, disability employment became a pressing political issue, though this was focused almost entirely upon disabled ex-servicemen, who received unique consideration in welfare owing to their having become disabled in service to the nation.<sup>12</sup> The dominant view of this period, espoused by Cohen and Bolderson is that inter-war governments wished to limit their responsibility for providing employment for disabled ex-servicemen, preferring instead to rely on the provision of pensions, the goodwill of employers, and the efforts of the voluntary sector wherever possible.<sup>13</sup> This appears to have been a result of both a common and

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<sup>10</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 21-33; Reznick, 'Work-Therapy and the Disabled British Soldier in Great Britain in the First World War', pp. 187-9; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, pp. 119-39; Cohen, *The War Come Home*, pp. 18-9; Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, pp. 44-5; Kowalsky, 'This Honourable Obligation', pp. 576-7.

<sup>11</sup> D. Cohen, 'Will to Work: Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany after the First World War', in D. A. Gerber (ed.) *Disabled Veterans in History* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2012), p. 295.

<sup>12</sup> TNA LAB 20/3, MOL, 'Memorandum on Scheme Adopted for Training Persons Disabled in the Last War'. For overview of special provisions for ex-servicemen see, Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 37-40. See also G. L. Hudson, 'Disabled Veterans and the State in Early Modern England', in D. A. Gerber (ed.) *Disabled Veterans in History* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2012), pp. 117-44.

<sup>13</sup> Deborah Cohen has been particularly critical of the government, see Cohen, 'Will to Work', pp. 297-300; Cohen, *The War Come Home*, pp. 16-7; Helen Bolderson gave a detailed account of the various opinions of the Ministry of Pensions, the Ministry of Labour and the Treasury, noting that the option to limit responsibility and reduce spending was generally dominant, Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 36-45, 56-7, 160-61; See also Reznick, 'Work-Therapy and the Disabled British Soldier in Great Britain in the First World War', p. 198; Anderson, who is slightly



persistent ideological resistance to state involvement in such issues and the problems of industrial unrest, economic depression and mass unemployment faced by successive inter-war governments, which are seen as having limited the increasing commitment to reconstruction and welfare measures shown in the period more generally.<sup>14</sup>

In terms of disability employment, a limited number of measures were put in place, perhaps the most important being the establishment of the King's National Roll Scheme in 1919.<sup>15</sup> This was a voluntary scheme intended to evoke employers' patriotic sense of duty with a royal appeal for them to employ disabled ex-servicemen as at least five per cent of their workforce.<sup>16</sup> In addition to this were the numerous schemes for training and instruction, in which the government was involved to varying degrees, from organising and operating instructional centres, to providing financial and logistical assistance to charitable undertakings or private employers.<sup>17</sup> While indicating the beginning of a gradual movement towards state responsibility for the employment of disabled ex-servicemen, these steps proved inadequate in combating continued unemployment and poverty. Government faith in industry

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more impressed by government efforts, Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 15, 46-8; Kowalsky, 'This Honourable Obligation', pp. 570-1, 568-9; Meyers, 'Not Septimus Now', p. 122. TNA CAB 27/49, 'Demobilisation Committee: DM-57' (15.1.1919).

<sup>14</sup> Cohen, 'Will to Work', pp. 297-300; Cohen, *The War Come Home*, pp. 16-7; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 161; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 21-31; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, pp. 188-206; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, pp. 153-206; Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, pp. 49-51; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 38-9.

<sup>15</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-Departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, 'Note by the Ministry of Pensions'.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. For details of the scheme see Kowalsky, 'This Honourable Obligation'; Mantin, 'Coalmining and the National Scheme for Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the First World War', p. 170.

<sup>17</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, 'Memorandum on Training of Disabled Ex Service Men After the Great War: R.D.4'. Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 46-8; Kowalsky, 'This Honourable Obligation', p. 570.

absorbing disabled ex-servicemen proved to be misplaced.<sup>18</sup> Pensions, upon which such emphasis was placed, were insufficient and often subject to dispute.<sup>19</sup> The King's National Roll and the government's training measures could also claim only partial success.<sup>20</sup> Taken together, while government provision was generally well intentioned, it was clearly insufficient to provide a definitive solution to the problems of employment for disabled ex-servicemen in the inter-war period.<sup>21</sup>

This was particularly the case with those who were severely disabled. These men were referred to as the 'unemployables', who, because of the severity of their disability, found securing work virtually impossible.<sup>22</sup> Estimates differed on how many such cases there were, but it could have been as many as 25,000.<sup>23</sup> For these men there was little option for work beyond that provided by sheltered employment schemes run by charitable organisations. Some schemes provided training or limited employment in residential settings such as the Star and Garter Home for Disabled

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<sup>18</sup> TNA PIN 15/35, Bedford and District Employment Committee, 'Employment Sub Committee for Disabled Sailors and Soldiers' (1920). Cohen, 'Will to Work', pp. 302-3; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 56-7; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, pp. 96-8.

<sup>19</sup> Cohen, *The War Come Home*, p. 4; Meyer, 'Not Septimus Now', p. 122; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 46-7.

<sup>20</sup> TNA CAB 24/106/55, 'Report from the Ministry of Labour' (26.05.1920); TNA LAB 20/416, 'Extract from Select Committee Report on Training and Employment of Disabled Ex-Service Men', p. vi; 'Note by Mr. R. Gomme to Mr. Glen' (26.02.1941); 'Disabled Men's Workshops', *The Times* (19.05.1921); TNA CAB 24/84/92, 'Cabinet Memorandum: The Labour Situation. Report from the Ministry of Labour' (23.7.1919). *Report from the Select Committee on Pensions*, 185 (1920), p. iv, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 24/06/2017). Kowalsky, 'This Honourable Obligation', p. 573; Reznick, 'Work-Therapy and the Disabled British Soldier in Great Britain in the First World War', p. 198; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 47; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 36-41; Cohen, *The War Come Home*, pp. 39-40; Cohen 'Will to Work', pp. 302-3; Mantin, 'Coalmining and the National Scheme for Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the First World War', p. 170.

<sup>21</sup> Meyer, 'Not Septimus Now', pp. 117-38; Cohen, *The War Come Home*, pp. 104-14; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 39.

<sup>22</sup> TNA PIN 15/35, Bedford and District Employment Committee, 'Employment Sub-Committee for Disabled Sailors and Soldiers' (1920).

<sup>23</sup> This was the figure arrived at by R. Fortescue Fox, TNA PIN 15/34, 'The Return of the Disabled Solider to Civil Life', *The Lancet* (04.09.1920); TNA PIN 15/35, Committee on Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men, 'Minutes of the First Meeting' (30.09.1920).

Soldiers and Sailors, opened in 1916.<sup>24</sup> More ambitious schemes, such as the Enham Village Centre involved whole sheltered communities of disabled ex-servicemen.<sup>25</sup> The majority of schemes however, involved employment in workshops to which workers would commute each day, the most prominent of which were the Lord Robert's Memorial Workshops. Operated by the Soldiers and Sailors Help Society following the Boer War, these were renamed in honour of Field Marshall Lord Roberts, a trustee of the workshops and recipient of the Victoria Cross, who had passed away during a visit to the front in 1914.<sup>26</sup> The Lord Robert's Memorial Workshops expanded during the First World War, and at the end of 1919 employed over 600 men in several locations around the country.<sup>27</sup> Though likely preferable to unemployment, such workshops could be less than ideal for workers, in terms of environment and types of work undertaken, and were run on very slight budgets reliant on public generosity.<sup>28</sup>

There was some detailed discussion of the possibility of a government scheme of sheltered employment in the aftermath of the First World War under David Lloyd George's coalition government, with the idea of 'state factories' for severely disabled ex-servicemen raised, and initially accepted, on 15 January 1919, during a meeting of

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<sup>24</sup> For more on these see Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 49-55; Anderson and Pemberton, 'Walking Alone', pp. 459-79.

<sup>25</sup> For these schemes, see TNA PIN 15/34, 'Village Settlements for Disabled Ex-Service Men Scheme' (November. 1917); 'Village Settlements for the Disabled', *The Lancet*, (03.11.1917); 'Reconstruction: Village Settlements for Disabled Ex-Service Men', *Westminster Gazette*, (09.11.1917); TNA PIN 15/37, Village Centres Council, 'First Annual Report' (1919); TNA PIN 15/36, Committee on Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men, 'Minutes of the Third Meeting' (20.10.1920). Cohen, *The War Come Home*, p. 35. See also University of Leeds Special Collections, T.H. Mawson, *An Imperial Obligation: Industrial Villages for Partially Disabled Soldiers and Sailors* (London, 1917).

<sup>26</sup> TNA LAB 20/78, 'The Incorporated Soldiers, Sailors and Airmens Help Society and Lord Roberts Memorial Fund and Workshops Annual Report for 1944' (1944), pp. 28-9.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.; TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, 'Note by the Ministry of Pensions: R.D.9'.

<sup>28</sup> See Cohen, *The War Come Home*, pp. 112-4; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 27-8; Kowalsky, 'Enabling the Great War', pp. 102-3.

the War Cabinet Demobilisation Committee. Discussing the position of discharged disabled ex-servicemen, the Committee considered the question of whether ‘special factories should be set aside to be operated by disabled men’.<sup>29</sup> The Committee concluded that the government should indeed ‘provide a certain number of factories solely for the employment of certain classes of disabled men who, on account of special disability, may be found to be unable to engage in ordinary industrial occupations’.<sup>30</sup> Just a few months later however, the MOL had decided that the scheme ‘for the State employment of disabled men in National Factories’ was not ‘practicable’.<sup>31</sup> The idea would, however, be raised again the same year in a cabinet report from the MOL.<sup>32</sup> This report explained that ‘the Government have already anticipated that it may be necessary for them to create direct employment for very badly disfigured men’ responsibility for which had been placed with the Ministry of Pensions (MOP).<sup>33</sup> The MOP however, apparently did not see any ‘justification for putting up factories for employment’.<sup>34</sup>

The issue was raised again the following year by the cross-party Select Committee on Pensions, which recognised that there was a significant number of severely disabled men who could not find ordinary employment and for whom no government provision was being made.<sup>35</sup> As part of its proceedings, the Committee took evidence from the Minister of Labour, Thomas Macnamara, a Coalition Liberal and close associate of

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<sup>29</sup> TNA CAB 27/49, ‘War Cabinet Demobilisation Committee: DM -57’ (15.01.1919).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> TNA CAB 24/80/62, ‘Cabinet Memorandum: The Labour Situation. Report from the Ministry of Labour’ (28.05.1919).

<sup>32</sup> TNA CAB 24/87/60, ‘Cabinet Memorandum: The Labour Situation. Report from the Ministry of Labour’ (27.08.1919).

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> See evidence given by Colonel J.S. Bostock, Director of the Treatment-Training Branch of the Medical Services Division of the Ministry of Pensions, *Report from the Select Committee on Pensions*, 185 (1920), p. 110, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 24/06/2017).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. iv; *Ministry of Labour, Committee on Re-Employment of Ex-Servicemen, Interim Report*, 951 (1920), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 24/06/2017).

Lloyd George, who admitted the need for sheltered workshops, but not necessarily for state involvement.<sup>36</sup> Noting charitable schemes such as the Lord Robert's Memorial Workshops, he concluded that 'provision of this kind is necessary for men who cannot hope to compete in the industrial world'.<sup>37</sup> However, despite noting that these voluntary schemes were not sufficient to meet the demand, and under repeated questioning from the Committee on government involvement, Macnamara would admit no more than it being a matter 'which we are seriously considering'.<sup>38</sup> Thus the attitude of the MOL was non-committal, whilst the attitude of the MOP appears to have been that such individuals would have to rely solely on their pension.<sup>39</sup> Despite this opposition, in its report produced in August 1920, the Committee recommended that arrangements including 'special workshops' should be made for those who 'possess some potential earning capacity, but could only exercise it if some special arrangements were made for enabling them to do so'.<sup>40</sup> Once again then, the idea of state-run sheltered employment was put to the fore.

Such a scheme was given its full and final consideration later in the year. In response to what was described as demand 'from all sides', the MOL formed the inter-departmental Committee on the Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Servicemen in September 1920.<sup>41</sup> Part of this demand came from the Lord Robert's Memorial Workshops themselves, which were specifically referenced in the terms of the

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<sup>36</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Pensions*, 185 (1920), p. 184, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 24/06/2017).

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184; R. Betts, 'Macnamara, Thomas James (1861–1931), educationist and politician', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (03.01.2008), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-34806> (accessed 08/07/2018).

<sup>38</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Pensions*, 185 (1920), pp. 185-7, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 24/06/2017).

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. ix-xii.

<sup>41</sup> TNA PIN 15/35, Committee on Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men, 'Minutes of the First Meeting' (30.09.1920).

Committee. The Comptroller of the workshops, Sir Algernon Tudor-Craig, had approached the Minister of Labour the previous year to inform him that the workshops were on the brink of ruin and to propose either that the government gave financial assistance or took over the workshops entirely.<sup>42</sup> The Committee heard evidence from a wide range of interested parties including representatives of charitable sheltered employment schemes, trade unions, ex-serviceman organisations, employers and local employment committees.<sup>43</sup> There was a great deal of support for the idea of state factories, with arguments highlighting the national debt owed to these ex-servicemen and that only a large government-backed network of sheltered employment could provide adequate, and equal, provision.<sup>44</sup> There was, however, some significant opposition to the idea from a number of local employment committees, and from within the Committee itself, centred on Adair Hore from the MOP, who seems to have been against the idea from the beginning.<sup>45</sup> Hore was noted by Cohen as being ‘among the most powerful officials’ in the MOP and as someone particularly resistant to state involvement in the issue of employment provision for disabled people.<sup>46</sup> A number of objections were raised, including: that the factories

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<sup>42</sup> TNA PIN 15/34, ‘Proposals Made by the Comptroller of the Lord Roberts’ Memorial Workshops for Assistance by the Government’.

<sup>43</sup> For a list see TNA PIN 15/37, ‘Provisional Interim Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider the Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men (with special reference to Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops)’ (18.01.1921).

<sup>44</sup> TNA PIN 15/37, ‘Summary of Replies of Local Employment Committees to Questionnaire, Memo 60’ (1921); ‘The Employment of Severely Disabled Men, Memo no. 37’ (27.11.1920); Committee on Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men, ‘Minutes of the Sixth Meeting’ (11.11.1920); Committee on Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men, ‘Minutes of the Tenth Meeting’ (26.11.1920); Committee on Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men, ‘Minutes of the Twelfth Meeting’ (09.12.1920); ‘Provisional Interim Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider the Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men (with special reference to Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops)’ (18.01.1921).

<sup>45</sup> TNA PIN 15/37, Committee on Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men, ‘Minutes of the Seventh Meeting’ (17.11.1920); ‘G. Crosfield reply to questionnaire, Memo no. 35’ (26.11.1920); TNA PIN 15/36, ‘Note from A. Hore’ (08.10.1920); TNA PIN 15/37, ‘Provisional Interim Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider the Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men (with special reference to Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops)’ (18.01.1921). Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 41-3; Cohen, *The War Come Home*, pp. 40-5.

<sup>46</sup> Cohen, *The War Come Home*, p. 42.

would run at a loss;<sup>47</sup> that they would not gain the approval of industry;<sup>48</sup> that they would involve moving disabled ex-servicemen away from their homes and families;<sup>49</sup> that the factories would be unable to sell their products;<sup>50</sup> that disabled ex-servicemen already in employment would abandon their current work to join the scheme;<sup>51</sup> that state involvement would lead to demands for higher wages;<sup>52</sup> and that a national scheme would not be flexible enough to deal with local issues.<sup>53</sup> Hore circulated a memorandum outlining his own objections to the idea to members of the Committee, suggesting such a notion was beyond the responsibility of the state and, contrary to the general opinion of the Committee, that the pensions provided were an adequate substitute to employment.<sup>54</sup>

The result was that the Committee recommended to the Cabinet that state factories should not be established and instead ‘the best hope of solution to be along the lines of voluntary effort locally organised and administered but with a certain amount of

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<sup>47</sup> TNA PIN 15/35, ‘Memorandum by Training Department on the employment of men whose disabilities preclude their absorption into industry’; TNA PIN 15/36, ‘Note from A. Hore’ (08.10.1920).

<sup>48</sup> TNA PIN 15/36, ‘Note from A. Hore’ (08.10.1920); TNA PIN 15/35, ‘Memorandum by Training Department on the employment of men whose disabilities preclude their absorption into industry’.

<sup>49</sup> TNA PIN 15/37, ‘Provisional Interim Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider the Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men (with special reference to Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops)’ (18.01.1921).

<sup>50</sup> TNA PIN 15/36, ‘Note from A. Hore’ (08.10.1920).

<sup>51</sup> TNA PIN 15/37, ‘Provisional Interim Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider the Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men (with special reference to Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops)’ (18.01.1921).

<sup>52</sup> TNA PIN 15/36, Committee on Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Servicemen, ‘Minutes of Second Meeting’ (07.10.1920).

<sup>53</sup> TNA PIN 15/37, ‘Provisional Interim Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider the Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men (with special reference to Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops)’ (18.01.1921).

<sup>54</sup> TNA PIN 15/33, C.F.A. Hore, ‘Memorandum, Committee on the Employment of Severely Disabled Men’ (16.12.1920); TNA PIN 15/37, ‘Provisional Interim Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider the Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men (with special reference to Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops)’ (18.01.1921).

central guidance and central assistance'.<sup>55</sup> The burden of administration and finance would fall to LAs working with charitable enterprise.<sup>56</sup> The State was to provide financial assistance only, through the awarding of grants. The amount of these grants was to be £25 per capita, per annum – only a quarter of the average loss per man at the Lord Robert's Memorial Workshops.<sup>57</sup> Even this limited proposal received opposition, chiefly from the Treasury with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Robert Horne, a Conservative in the coalition government, writing a memorandum in June 1921 for the Cabinet registering his opposition.<sup>58</sup> By the time of Horne's appointment in April a severe economic downturn had led to calls from industry and from within his own party for reductions in government expenditure.<sup>59</sup> As such Horne 'became the chancellor most associated with Treasury deflation and the financial constriction of reconstruction policies'.<sup>60</sup> His memorandum on the recommendations of the Committee reflected this overall agenda as he explained that 'the state of national finance makes it impossible to contemplate any further increase of expenditure'.<sup>61</sup> Noting the rising levels of unemployment generally, he also evoked the argument that pensions were an adequate provision, explaining that in his view 'so far as the grievance of these men is that they cannot find employment, their case is not

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<sup>55</sup> TNA PIN 15/37, 'Provisional Interim Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider the Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men (with special reference to Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops)' (18.01.1921).

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> TNA CAB 24/123/79, 'Cabinet Summary of the Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider the Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men (with special reference to Lords Roberts Memorial Workshops)' (25.05.1921); TNA PIN 15/34, 'Memo by Finance Department as to the Financial Position of the Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops'. Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 42.

<sup>58</sup> TNA CAB 24/125/13, 'Cabinet Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, The Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Servicemen' (03.06.1921).

<sup>59</sup> P. Williamson, 'Horne, Robert Stevenson, Viscount Horne of Slamannan (1871–1940), politician and businessman', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (06.01.2011), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-33991> (accessed 14/07/2018).

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> TNA CAB 24/125/13, 'Cabinet Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, The Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Servicemen' (03.06.1921).



different at the present time from that of an unprecedented number of other men and women, who do not draw pensions from the state'.<sup>62</sup> Horne's interjection succeeded with the proposals initially rejected by the Cabinet.<sup>63</sup> The proposals were eventually accepted, albeit in weakened form, with grants awarded to support charitable employment schemes when, and only when, public funding through charitable donations proved insufficient.<sup>64</sup> Even with the small amounts involved it is apparent that the Treasury would do all it could to limit their award, much to the dismay of the sheltered workshops and sympathetic members of government.<sup>65</sup>

There was to be no change to this approach. A prevalent economic understanding that 'good governance' involved balancing the budget brought sustained expenditure cuts, beginning with the so-called 'Geddes Axe' of 1922, named after the Secretary to the Treasury, Sir Eric Geddes, who chaired the committee which recommended the policy of economic retrenchment and the abandonment of many reconstruction promises.<sup>66</sup> During the inter-war period, the MOL made grants to 'thirty separate enterprises' providing sheltered employment, which Cohen suggests probably employed around 2,000 workers, 'only a fraction of those who according to the government's figures needed work'.<sup>67</sup> This appears to have been the pattern of support, or lack thereof, for sheltered workshops throughout the inter-war period, regardless of which political party was in power.<sup>68</sup> Continuing high unemployment and economic difficulties punctuated by crises such as the General Strike in 1926 and the Wall Street Crash in

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.; TNA PIN 15/33, 'Note from C.F.A. Hore' (16.08.1921).

<sup>64</sup> TNA PIN 15/38, MOL, 'Scheme of Grants to Undertakings Formed for the Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men' (06.12.1923). Cohen, *The War Come Home*, p. 45.

<sup>65</sup> Cohen, *The War Come Home*, p. 45.

<sup>66</sup> Jones, *The Making of Social Policy in Britain*, pp. 104-5; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 38-9, 57; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, p. 92.

<sup>67</sup> Cohen, *The War Come Home*, pp. 45-6.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., pp. 44-6.

1931, limited advances in statutory welfare and perpetuated a reliance on the voluntary sector to deal with disabled people.<sup>69</sup> The Conservative government's reply to a parliamentary question on sheltered employment provision in 1938 confirmed that the awarding of grants to voluntary workshops was still considered 'the most practicable' system.<sup>70</sup>

The decision not to provide a state sheltered employment scheme did not end discussion however, with continued calls for governments to reconsider throughout the inter-war period. Those charged with attempting to assist severely disabled ex-servicemen into employment clearly recognised a need, as the MOL continued to receive requests for state sheltered employment from a number of its local employment committees.<sup>71</sup> Such sentiments were shared by the Divisional Controller for the South-Western Division of the King's Roll Scheme, who noted the increasing difficulty of placing such men in any employment.<sup>72</sup> There was also discussion of the issue in both the national and local press, with *The Times*, *Observer*, *Daily Express*, *Dundee Advertiser*, *The Manchester Guardian* and *Yorkshire Post* all featuring articles on the subject, many of which came to the government's attention.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Jones, *The Making of Social Policy in Britain*, pp. 104-5; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 38-9, 57; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, p. 92.

<sup>70</sup> Sir Smedley Crooke to Mr E. Brown, *Hansard* (22.12.1938), vol. 342 cc. 3101-3w.

<sup>71</sup> TNA CAB 24/80/62, 'Cabinet Memorandum: The Labour Situation. Report from the Ministry of Labour for the week ending 28<sup>th</sup> May 1919' (28.05.1919); TNA CAB 24/73/30, 'Cabinet Memorandum: The Labour Situation. Report from the Ministry of Labour for the week ending 1<sup>st</sup> January 1919' (01.01.1919); TNA PIN 15/35, 'Extract from the Minutes of the Meeting of the Northampton Employment Committee' (30.08.1920); 'Disabled Men's Future', *The Times* (11.02.1919); TNA PIN 15/34, 'Letter from Chester, Harwich and District Local Committee' (02.09.1920); TNA PIN 15/36, 'Resolution RE. Employment of Disabled Men Passed by the Dundee Local War Pensions Committee' (October, 1920).

<sup>72</sup> TNA CAB 24/121/7, 'Cabinet Memorandum: The Labour Situation. Report from the Ministry of Labour for the week ending 12 March 1921' (12.03.1921).

<sup>73</sup> TNA CAB 24/73/30, 'Cabinet Memorandum: The Labour Situation. Report from the Ministry of Labour for the week ending 1<sup>st</sup> January 1919' (01.01.1919). See also TNA PIN 15/34, R. Fortescue Fox, 'The Return of the Disabled Soldier to Civil Life', *The Lancet*, (04.09.1920); 'Should the State Provide Work?', *The Dundee Advertiser*, (14.10.1920). This was written to coincide with a conference on the issue to take place with Mr Winston Churchill, the Secretary for War, the following day; TNA

A testament to the continued demand for sheltered employment from disabled people themselves was indicated by a report in *The Times*, which noted that a ‘short paragraph’ in a previous issue on the opening of a workshop by the Disabled Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Workshops Association, ‘brought in over 2,000 applications from disabled ex-Service men earnestly wanting work’.<sup>74</sup> The issue thus became a key area of campaigning for organisations representing disabled people. As Hampton has noted, a political profile in the inter-war period was reserved for disabled ex-servicemen, the industrially-injured, and the blind, who were each represented by advocate groups.<sup>75</sup> As part of the wider welfare measures contained in the 1920 Blind Persons Act, LAs had already been made responsible for providing some sheltered employment exclusively for the blind, though as Reiss noted, the creation of a coherent national state network of sheltered employment remained a ‘core goal’ and a continued focus of campaigning for the National League of the Blind.<sup>76</sup> In the case of ex-servicemen, two of the most important groups, the British Legion and the British Limbless Ex-Service Men’s Association (BLESMA), the latter of which grew out of the ‘grassroots working class movement’ Limbless Ex-Servicemen’s Association, were both actively campaigning for further sheltered employment provision in the years preceding the Second World War.<sup>77</sup> A report in *The Times* from 1932 detailed the evidence given by the Chairman of the British Legion, Colonel John Brown to The Royal Commission on Unemployment Insurance, in which the Colonel explained

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PIN 15/34, ‘Sub-Normal Men’, *The Times* (27.09.1920), references the ‘the correspondence which has appeared in your columns during the last few weeks dealing with the employment of the disabled ex-officer and man’; ‘The Debt of Honour: Care of the Disabled’, *The Times* (25.09.1920). ‘A Thought for Armistice Day’, *The Manchester Guardian* (11.11.1938).

<sup>74</sup> ‘Disabled Men’s Workshops’, *The Times* (19.05.1921).

<sup>75</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 53-4.

<sup>76</sup> Reiss, *Blind Workers against Charity*, p. 140; TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), p. 5.

<sup>77</sup> P. Ryde, *Out on a Limb* (British Limbless Ex-Service Men’s Association, 1982); Kowalsky, ‘Enabling the Great War’, pp. 182-9.

that it had always been the policy of the British Legion that sheltered employment was necessary for 'the severely disabled ex-Service man', and he called on government involvement in providing this.<sup>78</sup> In 1938, a series of articles in both *The Times* and *The Manchester Guardian* followed a petition sent to the then Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, from BLESMA calling for government provision of sheltered employment.<sup>79</sup> It was noted that BLESMA had been campaigning on this issue for a number of years.<sup>80</sup> Following the petitions refusal, a BLESMA representative was reported as saying that 'the association would persist in its request'.<sup>81</sup> In addition to this campaigning, awareness of existing charitable workshops, such as those provided by the British Legion and the Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops, was maintained through charitable appeals in the press and fundraising activities.<sup>82</sup> Whilst it is not possible to gauge the full extent of campaigning activities for sheltered employment, such examples indicate that successive inter-war governments were coming under pressure from groups representing disabled people calling for state provision of sheltered employment. Though no government was to acquiesce, both the demand and desire for a state-sheltered employment scheme from those groups representing disabled people was clearly evident.

It is also important to note that this was not unique to the question of sheltered employment, with two of the other key measures of the DPEA also receiving

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<sup>78</sup> 'Unemployment Insurance', *The Times* (05.03.1932).

<sup>79</sup> 'Ex-Service Men's Request Refused', *The Times* (10.09.1938); 'War-Disabled Men's Pensions', *The Manchester Guardian* (04.04.1938); 'Premier's Reply to Ex-Servicemen', *The Manchester Guardian* (09.07.1938); 'Ex-Servicemen and their widows', *The Manchester Guardian* (10.09.1938).

<sup>80</sup> 'War-Disabled Men's Pensions', *The Manchester Guardian* (04.04.1938).

<sup>81</sup> 'Ex-Servicemen and their widows', *The Manchester Guardian* (10.09.1938).

<sup>82</sup> See for example, 'National Tribute Fund', *The Times* (20.05.1918); 'Lord Roberts', *The Times* (22.05.1918); 'Christmas Appeals', *The Times* (24.12.1929); 'Occupational Therapy', *The Times* (06.09.1937); 'Men with nerves wrecked by the war', *The Times* (04.08.1939); 'This week is National Tribute Week', *Daily Mail* (20.05.1918); Kowalsky, 'Enabling the Great War', p. 189.

consideration at this time. The idea of a compulsory quota of disabled workers for industry was raised frequently by the Committee on the Employment of Severely Disabled Men, but was rejected in favour of the voluntary King's National Roll Scheme.<sup>83</sup> Similarly, the idea of a number of reserved trades for disabled people was put to the Cabinet by the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Pensions in 1918, but was not to survive the following general election.<sup>84</sup> Employment prospects for disabled ex-servicemen more generally have also been shown by historians such as Cohen, Anderson and Kowalsky, to have enjoyed sustained interest from both politicians and the public throughout the inter-war period.<sup>85</sup> The question of sheltered employment was therefore part of a growing wider discourse on employment provision for disabled ex-servicemen.

In the case of sheltered employment it is clear that there were significant developments in the inter-war period which appear to follow the same broad process as disability employment provision more generally. We see increased, though strictly limited, government measures focused on disabled ex-servicemen, which proved insufficient, and thereby resulted in sustained, though unsuccessful, campaigning for

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<sup>83</sup> See Kowalsky, 'This Honourable Obligation', p. 573, who notes that the Committee, helmed by Sir Brunel-Cohen, introduced a new bill to make it compulsory each year between 1921 and 1929 but was outvoted each time.

<sup>84</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 38-9, Kowalsky, 'This Honourable Obligation', pp. 577-8.

<sup>85</sup> TNA CAB 24/88/84, 'Cabinet Memorandum: The Labour Situation. Report from the Ministry of Labour' (17.09.1919); TNA CAB 24/118/79, 'Cabinet Memorandum: The Labour Situation. Report from the Ministry of Labour' (22.01.1921); TNA PIN 15/33, which contains numerous press cuttings throughout the period containing articles, news and correspondence on the issue from papers including: *The Evening News*, *The Times*, *The Daily Express*, *The Times*, *Belfast Telegraph*, *The Daily Mail* and others. *Report of the Committee appointed by the President of the Local Government Board upon the Provision and Employment of Sailors and Soldiers Disabled in the War*, 7915 (1915) <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 17/08/2017). Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 38-9; Cohen, *The War Come Home*, pp. 22-5, 45-6; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, pp. 24-5; Reznick, 'Work-Therapy and the Disabled British Soldier in Great Britain in the First World War', p. 198; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 46-8; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 130; Kowalsky, 'This Honourable Obligation', pp. 567-78.

further provision. Crucially, it is clear that the idea of state-run sheltered employment and the demand for it, did not suddenly appear during the Second World War. The idea of a government scheme in the vein of what would become Remploy, was raised and seriously considered in the aftermath of the First World War, and though it was ultimately abandoned by Lloyd George's coalition government, further demand and campaigning efforts ensured that the notion did not disappear from public and political discourse. Having determined that the idea did not originate in the Second World War, the following section will build on this analysis by considering what impact the war did have on the creation of Remploy.

### The Impact of the Second World War

Though the idea of a state scheme of sheltered employment was clearly not a new one, it was finally enacted during the Second World War. The outbreak of war certainly placed the issue of provision for disabled people on the agenda with an urgency which would not have occurred without it, particularly in relation to those disabled by the war itself, which for the first time included significant numbers of women and civilians. Concern for the treatment, both in the long- and short-term, of disabled people was evident in both the public and political spheres throughout the war.<sup>86</sup> This also encapsulated the related issue of medical rehabilitation for those injured, with the need to preserve manpower, both in terms of the armed forces and the civilian population, necessitating rapid improvements in such provision.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> TNA LAB 20/3, 'Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Vocational Training of War Casualties' (1940); TNA LAB 20/2, 'Note from J.M. Glen' (22.10.1940). It is apparent that the press were also writing about the issue, 'Work for disabled Service men', *The Times* (08.12.1943); 'Workshop for casualties', *The Daily Herald* (09.12.1943); TNA LAB 20/108, 'Town has jobs for them', *The Daily Dispatch*, (06.10.1944); 'Adjusting Conditions of Work', *The Manchester Guardian* (04.04.1945).

<sup>87</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 97-9; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, pp. 167-70; TNA LAB 20/84, H. Balme, 'Britain Advances: The Unifit made Fit' (1943).

The manpower shortage caused by the Second World War has often been seen as having had a significant impact on the position of disabled people.<sup>88</sup> Historians such as Anderson and Borsay have suggested that the shortage of labour allowed disabled people to enter into a diminished workforce and prove their ability to be productive.<sup>89</sup> Disabled people thus became an important source of manpower for British industry.<sup>90</sup> This entry into the workforce occurred both naturally, as workers left for military service, and as the result of government intervention through the 'Interim Scheme' which provided training and employment advice for disabled people.<sup>91</sup> Easier access to mainstream employment also appears to have extended to some severely disabled people, which meant they could rely less on charitable sheltered employment schemes. Thus the sheltered settlement established by The Derwen Cripples' Training College saw its number of workers decline from forty-five in July 1939, to just thirteen in May 1940, whilst the Queen Elizabeth Training College for the Disabled could claim that by 1941, nearly 350 of its trainees had entered munitions work.<sup>92</sup> As Wheatcroft noted, disabled people, including the severely disabled, had shown themselves able to contribute productively to the war effort.<sup>93</sup>

While there can be little doubt that the inclusion of disabled people into the workforce during the war was largely beneficial in demonstrating their ability to be productive,

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<sup>88</sup> Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, pp. 167-70; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 53; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 212; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, pp. 133-4; Hampton, 'Discovering Disability', p. 77.

<sup>89</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 212; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, pp. 133-4.

<sup>90</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 104-5.

<sup>92</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, 'Memorandum by the Board of Education on the Vocational Training of Cripples: R.D.17'. Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 102.

<sup>93</sup> Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 143.

there was no guarantee that it would itself lead to permanent change. At the end of the war the munitions industries which had employed so many disabled people would be scaled-back for peace time and those disabled people employed in other industries would be unlikely to keep any job in competition with a returning soldier or other non-disabled person. The temporary nature of the situation was recognised at the time, with those considering the issue of disability employment attempting to focus not on the anomaly of the war-time situation but ‘to visualise the peace-time position’.<sup>94</sup> Similarly, Bevin himself emphasised the longer-term manpower requirements for the task of reconstruction following the war in justification for the measures contained in the DPEA, with the Minister of Labour arguing that ‘this country will not be able for the next 50 years to afford an unemployed man or to allow a man to be kept away from industry because he is unfit or injured’.<sup>95</sup> The DPEA would therefore function to maximise ‘the productive capacity of every human being we have at our disposal’ in terms of the needs of post-war reconstruction.<sup>96</sup> The most important impact of the manpower shortage caused by the Second World War in terms of the creation of Remploy, and of the other measures of the DPEA, was therefore to assist in the recognition of the ability of disabled people to be productive and contribute both to the war effort and to the task of reconstruction that would follow.

For Bolderson, a further key impact of the Second World War on policy was to add a sense of urgency in the political psyche for the proposals put forward regarding rehabilitation and disabled people.<sup>97</sup> While Bevin may have insisted that the DPEA was not the result of the war, this does not seem to have been the opinion of other

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<sup>94</sup> TNA LAB 14/429, ‘George Tomlinson to the Factory and Welfare Advisory Board’ (09.03.1943).

<sup>95</sup> Mr. Ernest Bevin, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1349.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 106.



Members of Parliament (MPs).<sup>98</sup> The question of the impact of the war on the DPEA was addressed directly in the House of Commons during its reading at Bill stage. The Conservative MP, Rear-Admiral Beamish, whose own son was twice wounded during the Second World War, remarked that ‘I maintain that the Bill was produced...solely and wholly because we are at war...I repeat again that the Bill would never have come before the House if it had not been for the war’.<sup>99</sup> The war was frequently referenced in these deliberations in highly emotive terms. The Labour MP, Tom Brown, who had campaigned for years on behalf of miners, foundry and textile workers suffering from respiratory diseases, remarked:

If in the future any of us, either individually or in unions or political parties, do anything to let down these men and women and all they have endured for us, I can only say that it will be to our eternal, everlasting shame...if by keeping them in suitable employment, we can prevent men who have served on the field of battle or men who have served in industry from becoming degraded, we shall have gone a long way towards bringing about that new world that has been promised us often in days gone by.<sup>100</sup>

Similarly, Beamish declared:

The other section of immense importance among the disabled comes from the inevitable strife of war, which has produced, and I say will continue to produce for all foreseeable time, an immense number of disabled people. We have in fact a terrible toll, a gigantic price, to pay for those frailties and failings of mankind, but I feel deeply conscious, and I am sure the whole House has felt it too, that it is a burden which it is our bounden duty to face with every show of efficiency.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Mr. Ernest Bevin, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1345; Mr. Ernest Bevin, *Hansard* (18.01.1944), vol. 396, cc. 106.

<sup>99</sup> Rear-Admiral Beamish, *Hansard* (18.01.1944), vol. 396, cc. 109; P. Cosgrave, ‘Beamish, Tufton Victor Hamilton, Baron Chelwood (1917–1989), army officer and politician’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (08.01.2015), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-69057> (accessed 26/08/2019).

<sup>100</sup> Mr. Tom Brown, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1299-1302; ‘Obituary: Mr Tom Brown’, *The Times* (11.11.1970).

<sup>101</sup> Rear-Admiral Beamish, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1329.

The concern over the provision for those newly disabled during the war was also frequently evoked in terms of the desire to avoid a repeat of the failures of the provisions from the previous war. The Labour MP, Ellis Smith, who was on the committee of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) looking into rehabilitation, had remarked in 1942 that ‘I intend to do all I can to prevent this and future generations being treated as my generation was treated. We came home after the last war and scarcely anyone bothered with us’.<sup>102</sup> He went on to express the hope that ‘all public-spirited men and women in this House will join in seeing that we shall not after this war allow human suffering and tragedies to exist as they did for 20 years – the best part of my life – after the war’.<sup>103</sup> Similar sentiments were expressed during the readings of the DPEA, with the widely-respected Labour MP Jack Lawson asserting that ‘there is no subject which has caused the people of this country more heart-searching than the way in which the soldier was treated after the last war’.<sup>104</sup> Similarly, Brown, who designated the Bill as the ‘Remembrance Act’, suggested that after the last war, the country had stopped remembering, but that this could not be allowed to happen again.<sup>105</sup> The Labour MP, and former Trade Union organiser, Evelyn Walkden, also warned that ‘the tide of patriotism in war-time recedes quickly when the war-drums cease to roll’.<sup>106</sup> This attitude is perhaps best exemplified by the Conservative MP, Sir Ian Fraser, who had long campaigned on behalf of fellow blind

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<sup>102</sup> Mr. Ellis Smith, *Hansard* (22.07.1942), vol. 382, cc. 50-126.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> Mr. Lawson, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1283; D. Bythell, ‘Lawson, John James [Jack], Baron Lawson (1881–1965), coalminer and politician’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (23.09.2004), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-47371> (accessed 06/02/2018).

<sup>105</sup> Mr. Tom Brown, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1299.

<sup>106</sup> Mr. Evelyn Walkden, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1340; Lord Robens of Woldingham, ‘Obituary: Mr Evelyn Walkden’, *The Times* (17.09.1970).

ex-servicemen, and who noted that ‘good sometimes comes out of evil...the tragic consequences of war have stirred the imagination and accelerated tendencies, which have already been in people’s minds, to action’.<sup>107</sup> With the level of praise heaped upon the Bill, the Labour MP George Isaacs was able to claim, with perhaps only some exaggeration, that ‘the whole House seems to be rejoicing that a Bill of this kind has come before it’.<sup>108</sup> Thus the war certainly appears to have ensured general support for the DPEA and its swift movement through Parliament.

The DPEA did not, of course, appear in isolation, there were other welfare measures being considered during the course of the war which would form the subsequent welfare state, such as the Education Act 1944, and some preliminary discussions on health reform which would eventually lead to the formation of the NHS.<sup>109</sup> While the famous Beveridge Report produced in 1942 did not make mention of the specifics of provision for disabled people such as sheltered employment, the system of social security advocated was predicated on employment contributions to social insurance and as such, it emphasised the obligation for the government to provide employment for all those capable of undertaking it.<sup>110</sup> So while the Report was non-specific, the idea of sheltered employment was entirely compatible with its overall aims. Indeed, the notion of the maintenance of ‘full employment’ was a central aspect of post-war social policy aims outlined in the Report and in the war-time coalition government’s 1944 White Paper on Employment Policy.<sup>111</sup> The provision of employment for the disabled in the DPEA was therefore part of this overall vision for welfare and

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<sup>107</sup> Sir Ian Fraser, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1311.

<sup>108</sup> Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1307.

<sup>109</sup> Hill, *The Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 11-24.

<sup>110</sup> *Social Insurance and Allied Services*, 6404 (1942), para. 22, p. 12; para. 130, p. 58, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 15/05/2018).

<sup>111</sup> Gladstone, ‘The Welfare State and the State of Welfare’, p. 2; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 33.

employment which would then create the welfare state.<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, the war necessitated unprecedented levels of centralised government control and planning over areas of civilian life and in the tackling of social problems.<sup>113</sup> In this context, government ownership of a scheme of sheltered employment was perhaps not quite as radical a step as it was once considered. This was also reflected at a practical level, with the general disruption and war-time control over industry, providing an opportune moment in which to begin to apply state-control to a large-scale sheltered employment scheme.<sup>114</sup> The sheltered employment scheme of Remploy was thus consistent with the experience of central government control during the war, and the wider measures of employment and welfare envisaged for peace-time.

Whilst we cannot therefore see the Second World War as the sole impetus for Remploy, we cannot discount the impact of it either. The war served to demonstrate the productivity potential of disabled people, including the severely disabled, provided the impetus needed to take bold action, and aided the acceptance of state involvement in the provision of employment for the disabled. More generally, we cannot ignore that Remploy, as with the other measures of the DPEA, was formulated, discussed and created during the course of the Second World War alongside other reforms which would create the welfare state. It is to a closer examination of the development of the notion of a sheltered employment scheme in the creation of the DPEA during this time that this chapter will now turn.

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<sup>112</sup> Sainsbury, 'Disabled People and the Personal Social Services', p. 184.

<sup>113</sup> Coxall and Robins, *British Politics Since the War*, pp. 9-10; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 36-7.

<sup>114</sup> *Report of Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 6415 (1943), para. 92, p. 35, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 15/05/2018).

## Sheltered Employment in the Development of the DPEA: The Role of Committees and Parliament

The DPEA was developed from the deliberations of a number of committees, chiefly the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons (Tomlinson Committee), and the Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee (Ince Committee), followed by a number of debates in Parliament. With Remploy typically referenced by academics as simply one aspect of the DPEA, the common underlying assumption has remained that it was created as part of a singular development of the Act alongside the other measures.<sup>115</sup> Through close examination of the progression of the DPEA, this section will explore if this was indeed the case, revealing the extent of discussion of what would become Remploy in these areas for the first time.

Consideration was given to provisions for those disabled during the war from its beginning, though this was chiefly focused on the area of medical rehabilitation linked to the Ministry of Health.<sup>116</sup> Following Bevin's appointment as Minister of Labour in Churchill's new coalition government in May 1940, numerous committees came into being and considered the issue of rehabilitation and employment for disabled people more generally.<sup>117</sup> The first of these, the Inter-Departmental

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<sup>115</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*; Bolderson, 'The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance'; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 168; Reiss, *Blind Workers Against Charity*, pp. 138-41; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 183-5; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, pp. 224-5; Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain*, p. 237; Lonsdale, *Work and Inequality*, p. 120; Shah and Priestley, *Disability and Social Change*, pp. 121-2; Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, pp. 71-2; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 55; Hyde, 'Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s', p. 200.

<sup>116</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*; pp. 95-9.

<sup>117</sup> C. Wrigley, 'Bevin, Ernest (1881–1951), trade unionist and politician', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (01.03.2008), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-31872> (accessed 07/09/2016).

Committee on the Vocational Training of War Casualties (Glen Committee), which deliberated in 1940, was limited to only considering a scheme for vocational training for those injured as a result of the war.<sup>118</sup> Even within this narrow remit, it expressly did not consider those who had been injured working in industry nor those ‘persons so badly disabled that they cannot be trained for any industrial occupation’.<sup>119</sup> For these severely disabled people the Committee simply noted that ‘special provision will no doubt be made for such cases’.<sup>120</sup>

Bevin had set out his own views on rehabilitation in a memorandum for the Home Policy Committee in February 1941.<sup>121</sup> Though it set out his aims of a comprehensive service inclusive of both those injured in war and in industry, and referenced an expanded quota scheme on the lines of the King’s Roll, it made no mention of sheltered employment.<sup>122</sup> Following the rejection of his plans by the Home Policy Committee, Bevin and his officials in the MOL were, as one official noted, free ‘to go ahead and make a start in our schemes for dealing at least with men who have been disabled by enemy action in the present war’.<sup>123</sup> The result of this was the so-called ‘Interim Scheme’, which was announced in October 1941 and through which disabled

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<sup>118</sup> TNA LAB 20/3, Inter-Departmental Committee on the Vocational Training of War Casualties, ‘Minutes of the Fourth Meeting’ (19.09.1940); Inter-Departmental Committee on the Vocational Training of War Casualties, ‘Minutes of the Fifth Meeting’ (03.10.1940).

<sup>119</sup> TNA LAB 20/3, ‘Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Vocational Training of War Casualties’ (1940).

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> TNA LAB 20/2, ‘Draft Memorandum’ (01.02.1941); the draft of this memorandum seems the only copy available; ‘Note by F.N. Tribe’ (04.02.1941).

<sup>122</sup> TNA LAB 20/2, ‘Draft Memorandum’ (01.02.1941).

<sup>123</sup> TNA LAB 20/2, ‘Note by F.N. Tribe’ (27.02.1941); ‘Note by F.N. Tribe’ (12.02.1941); ‘Note From J. Worsfold’ (12.02.1941); Home Policy Committee, ‘Memorandum by the Minister of Health on Rehabilitation’ (24.02.1941); Home Policy Committee, ‘Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer’ (22.02.1941); Home Policy Committee, ‘Memorandum by the Home Secretary on Rehabilitation’ (25.02.1941). The proposals were discussed by the Committee on 26 February, who were not persuaded, TNA LAB 20/2, ‘Note from F.N. Tribe’ (27.02.1941). The Treasury was once again to be reluctant to support the Ministry of Labour’s plans for training, TNA LAB 20/2, ‘Note from Sir Alan Barlow’ (03.03.1941).

people were given advice about employment or trained for war work in government centres or employer's works.<sup>124</sup>

To fully consider the issue, The Inter-Departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, was established under the chairmanship of Bevin's Parliamentary Secretary George Tomlinson and would meet for the first time on 22 January 1942.<sup>125</sup> Tomlinson was a former textile worker who had established himself in local politics before becoming a Labour MP in 1938.<sup>126</sup> Held in high regard by Bevin he was to later to serve in Attlee's government as Minister of Works and then as Minister of Education.<sup>127</sup> The Tomlinson Committee was to consider both the immediate provision for those currently not provided for by the Interim Scheme, and for provision after the war for rehabilitation and the securing of 'satisfactory employment' for disabled people 'of all categories'.<sup>128</sup> This was the first time that the notion of securing satisfactory employment for all disabled persons, regardless of the cause of disability, had been considered a role for the state. While the Committee's initial focus was on aspects of the Interim Scheme, the issue of sheltered employment was briefly raised on several occasions in terms of the current voluntary provision available and the decision made to not enact a state scheme following the First World

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<sup>124</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*; pp. 104-5.

<sup>125</sup> TNA CAB 67/9/160, 'Rehabilitation, Training and Employment of Disabled Persons: Note by the Minister of Labour and National Service' (31.12.1941). The committee comprised members of the Ministries of Labour, Health, and Pensions as well as the Board of Education, the Scottish Office, the Treasury, and the Minister without Portfolio and, from the third meeting onwards, the Home Office, TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, 'Terms of Reference' (1942); Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, 'Minutes of the Third Meeting' (26.02.1942).

<sup>126</sup> K. Jefferys, 'Tomlinson, George (1890–1952), politician', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (06.01.2011),

<https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-36532> (accessed 07/09/2016).

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, 'Terms of Reference' (1942).

War.<sup>129</sup> The Tomlinson Committee submitted an Interim Report on 10 March 1942, focusing on its first task of recommending additions to the existing Interim Scheme, including ‘the provision of special facilities for sheltered employment for the more seriously disabled who are not provided for’.<sup>130</sup> These recommendations were limited however to simply making better use of existing voluntary establishments.<sup>131</sup> This was the limit of consideration of sheltered employment in the Interim Report, with the initial focus firmly on immediate war-time needs.

Following the publication of the Interim Report, the Tomlinson Committee moved onto consideration of the post-war situation.<sup>132</sup> This included the notion of a permanent sheltered employment scheme, though the precise nature of these discussions is not clear. References were made at the sixth and seventh meetings to a ‘Memorandum R.D.14’, which is unfortunately missing from the file of the Tomlinson Committee held at The National Archives.<sup>133</sup> There was mention at the seventh meeting of amendments to R.D.14, which included the complete substitution

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<sup>129</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Note by the Joint Secretaries on the Resettlement of Tuberculous Persons’ (13.05.1942); Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Minutes of the Second Meeting’ (12.02.1942); ‘Memorandum of Training of Disabled Ex-Service Men After the Great War: Based on Memorandum submitted by the Ministry of Labour: R.D. 4’; Inter-Departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Note by the Ministry of Pensions: R.D. 9’; Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Memorandum by the Board of Education on the Vocational Training of Cripples: R.D.17’.

<sup>130</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘First Report to the Minister of Labour and National Service’ (March, 1942). *Report of Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 6415 (1943), para. 3, p. 3, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 15/05/2018).

<sup>131</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘First Report to the Minister of Labour and National Service’ (March, 1942); Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Minutes of the Second Meeting’ (12.02.1942).

<sup>132</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Minutes of the Fifth Meeting’ (26.03.1942). For R.D.3., Tomlinson drew the Committee’s attention to the questions which had been posed by the Joint Secretaries, see Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Post War Scheme: Note by the Joint Secretaries’.

<sup>133</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Minutes of the Sixth Meeting’ (09.04.1942); Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Minutes of the Seventh Meeting’ (23.04.1942).



of the existing paragraph for a new one which dealt with the issue of sheltered employment.<sup>134</sup> This paragraph distinguished provision for those who may one day be able to enter into open employment and those who needed 'permanent employment under sheltered or sub-economic conditions'.<sup>135</sup> For the former, the use of existing voluntary institutions was advocated, whilst for the latter there was no indication of what provision might be made, if any, beyond this.<sup>136</sup>

A change appears to have taken place at the eighth meeting, which involved discussion of R.D.14 and further amendments regarding sheltered employment.<sup>137</sup>

One such amendment was to 'paragraph 2', so that it then read:

The Committee are of [the] opinion however that if the resources and scope of the voluntary undertakings prove insufficient to meet the requirement of a comprehensive and permanent scheme covering severe disablements from all causes, the need should be met by a system of special centres set up for the purpose.<sup>138</sup>

A further amendment to 'paragraphs 3 and 4' read:

(1) the allocation to a central Government Department of general responsibility for the new service of sheltered employment, whether in voluntary undertakings or in special centres; and (2) the establishment of a public corporation for the purpose of undertaking the trading operation and the day to day administration of the special centres.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, 'Minutes of the Seventh Meeting' (23.04.1942).

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, 'Minutes of the Eighth Meeting' (07.05.1942).

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.; TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, 'Minutes of the Ninth Meeting' (21.05.1942).

Here we see the outline of what would become Remploy, including the first mention of a public corporation to run sheltered employment ‘centres’, though it is clear that at this stage there was a preference to continue to rely on voluntary undertakings if possible. These few examples are the limit of consideration and discussion of what would become Remploy by the Tomlinson Committee, whose primary focus was clearly not upon sheltered employment, but upon consideration of the other measures which would be included in the DPEA.

The Tomlinson Report was completed and presented to Parliament in January 1943, gaining widespread attention from the press.<sup>140</sup> The report touched on a wide range of areas including medical rehabilitation, ‘post-hospital’ rehabilitation, resettlement and finance.<sup>141</sup> The emphasis of the report was on the return of disabled workers into open employment with three key recommendations; firstly, ‘the introduction of a quota of disabled persons’; secondly, ‘the scheduling of certain occupations for the benefit of disabled persons; and finally, ‘the creation of a Register of Persons Handicapped by Disablement’.<sup>142</sup> The section on ‘Employment under Sheltered Conditions’ came some way down the report, and noted the continued work of voluntary establishments and considered ‘that the post-war scheme should include full provision for the use of facilities for sheltered employment in voluntary undertakings’.<sup>143</sup> However, the opinion of the Committee appears to have changed, as the report continued:

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<sup>140</sup> *Report of Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 6415 (1943), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 15/05/2018); ‘Work for the Disabled’, *The Times* (15.01.1943); ‘Reserving Jobs for the Disabled’, *The Manchester Guardian* (15.01.1943); ‘Charter for War Disabled’, *Daily Mail* (15.01.1943).

<sup>141</sup> *Report of Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 6415 (1943), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 15/05/2018).

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 72, p. 28; para. 9, p. 6.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 90, p. 34.

The Committee are of [the] opinion however that the resources and scope of the voluntary undertakings cannot reasonably be expected to prove sufficient to meet the requirements of a comprehensive and permanent scheme covering severe disablements from all causes, and they consider that a system of special centres under Government auspices should be set up for the purpose.<sup>144</sup>

The recommendations of the Committee had thus changed from the use of state centres *only* if voluntary undertakings proved insufficient, to an assumption that they would in fact be required. It is not clear why this occurred prior to the publication of the report, as no consideration to this was given in the minutes of the previous meetings.<sup>145</sup>

January 1943 also saw the establishment of the Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, chaired by the Deputy Secretary to the Minister of Labour, Sir Godfrey Ince.<sup>146</sup> A civil servant in the MOL since 1919, Ince had been appointed director-general of manpower under Bevin in June 1941, with the two enjoying ‘an exceptional mutual trust’.<sup>147</sup> The Ince Committee was to coordinate preparation of the various aspects recommended in the Tomlinson Report.<sup>148</sup> The issue of sheltered employment again did not feature greatly in its considerations, with only three mentions of such provision in all nine committee meetings from February 1943

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid., para. 91, p. 34.

<sup>145</sup> For meeting minutes see TNA LAB 20/56.

<sup>146</sup> TNA LAB 20/85, Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘Second Report to the Minister of Labour and National Service: S.R.R.C.66’.

<sup>147</sup> R. Lowe, ‘Ince, Sir Godfrey Herbert (1891–1960), civil servant’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (03.01.2008), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-34095> (accessed 13/07/2019).

<sup>148</sup> TNA LAB 20/85, Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘Second Report to the Minister of Labour and National Service: S.R.R.C.66’; TNA LAB 20/87, Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘Minutes of Meeting’ (04.02.1943). Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 115.

through to the passing of the DPEA in March 1944, and no mention afterwards.<sup>149</sup>

Direct consideration was given only during the second meeting of the Ince Committee in which the Chairman noted that the recommendations of the Tomlinson Committee regarding sheltered employment were ‘a matter for Departmental action by [the] Ministry of Labour and National Service’.<sup>150</sup> The Ince Committee’s first report to Bevin in July 1943 simply echoed these remarks.<sup>151</sup>

The Ince Committee’s role in terms of sheltered employment was limited therefore to reviewing and offering amendments to the MOL’s own proposals for a Bill to enact the sheltered employment scheme, presented in paper ‘S.S.R.C.8’.<sup>152</sup> Even in this limited role, the amendments proposed by the Ince Committee reveal disagreement over the nature of the scheme. The section on sheltered employment in the original paper read:

It is proposed that this provision should principally be made by the establishment of a public corporation under the aegis of the Minister under the powers conferred by the Companies Act, 1929. There are, however, a number of voluntary societies and undertakings which already provide the necessary facilities for employment under “sheltered” conditions and the Minister should therefore be empowered to provide such training and employment or to defray

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<sup>149</sup> See minutes of meetings in TNA LAB 20/87.

<sup>150</sup> TNA LAB 20/87, Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘Minutes of the Second Meeting’ (04.03.1943). The only other mention was in relation to the case of Thermaga Limited, an voluntary undertaking for which the Ministry of Labour was attempting to secure exclusive rights to produce materials, TNA LAB 20/84, Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘Note by the Ministry of Labour and National Service, Production work for Undertakings providing sheltered employment for severely disabled persons: S.R.R.C.28’. This was mentioned again, TNA LAB 20/87 Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘Minutes of the Ninth Meeting’ (03.02.1944). The Ince Committee were unwilling to press the issue, however, due to objections from the Board of Trade, Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘Minutes of the Seventh Meeting’ (17.09.1943).

<sup>151</sup> TNA LAB 20/84, Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘First Report to the Minister of Labour and National Service: S.R.R.C.19’ (17.07.1943).

<sup>152</sup> TNA LAB 20/91, ‘Disabled Persons Rehabilitation and Resettlement: Proposals by the Ministry of Labour and National Service for a Bill to implement the recommendations of the Tolmlinson Committee: S.R.R.C.8’.

or contribute towards the cost of any such training or employment so provided by other persons or bodies.<sup>153</sup>

Another copy was amended to read, 'it is proposed that this provision should be made either through the use and development of facilities already provided by voluntary societies and undertakings or through the establishment of special centres to be set up for the purpose'.<sup>154</sup> A further copy had a different amendment, suggesting that 'it is proposed that this provision should be made in special centres to be set up and administered by a public corporation to be established under the aegis of the Minister'.<sup>155</sup> There were therefore three different versions of amendments to the MOL's proposals, either suggesting that sheltered employment should be 'principally' made through the state centres, or 'either' in these or voluntary provision, or entirely in state centres. Unlike the other measures of the DPEA, the Ince Committee had very limited input on the scheme of sheltered employment, and what input it had was inconsistent. The Ince Committee clearly did not see considerations of the sheltered employment scheme as a key part of its remit and played little part in its realisation.<sup>156</sup>

Finally, in terms of Parliament, as the draft Bill of the DPEA was presented to the House of Commons to consider, there was no mention of the sheltered employment aspect. Discussions in the Commons focused on other aspects of the draft, chiefly the issue of preference for ex-servicemen in the measures, leaving no discussion of the scheme which was to become Remploy. Consideration of the proposed Bill was

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> This was not due to a lack of time, as numerous meetings were postponed due to a 'lack of business'. The meeting of 6 January 1944 was postponed until 3 February 1944, TNA LAB 20/87, 'Note from E. Harrison' (23.12.1943). The meeting of 6 April 1944 was postponed until 4 May 1944, 'Note from E. Harrison' (15.03.1944). The meeting of 7 September 1944 was postponed until 5 October, 1944, 'Note from H. Chalk' (17.08.1944).

undertaken in the Commons on 10 December 1943. Tomlinson himself outlined the measures contained in the Bill, including ‘the creation of special facilities for the minority whose disablement prevents them permanently, or for a substantial period, obtaining employment of the ordinary kind and who require some shelter from the strain of competitive conditions’.<sup>157</sup> Tomlinson explained further that ‘the Minister may provide special facilities for this purpose in two ways. One is by the employment of a non-profit-making company, under the Companies Act, 1929, and the other is through an association or body similarly constituted and recognised for the purpose’.<sup>158</sup> The Bill was debated again on 18 January 1944 with discussion on a variety of aspects but with no mention of the sheltered scheme.<sup>159</sup> The Bill was then read in the House of Lords on 15 February 1944, again with no mention of the sheltered employment aspect.<sup>160</sup> Further discussion took place in the Commons on 27 January 1944, 4 February 1944 and on 1 March 1944.<sup>161</sup> The sheltered employment scheme was mentioned only once in these substantial debates, and this was on 27 January and was a minor amendment for clarification of the language of the relevant Clause, which passed without comment.<sup>162</sup> There was thus no meaningful consideration of the sheltered employment scheme in Parliament prior to the DPEA gaining royal assent on 1 March 1944.<sup>163</sup>

Nor do we see much attention given to sheltered employment following this. The scheme was mentioned in a written question to Bevin on 24 March 1944, and when

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<sup>157</sup> Mr. Tomlinson, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1268-9.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, cc. 1275.

<sup>159</sup> Disabled Persons (Employment) Bill, *Hansard* (18.01.1944), vol. 396, cc.67-148.

<sup>160</sup> Lord Snell, *Hansard* (18.01.1944), vol. 130 cc. 763-7.

<sup>161</sup> See *Hansard* (27.01.1944), vol. 396 cc. 877-1028; (04.02.1944), vol. 396, cc. 1546-1576; (01.03.1944), vol. 397, cc. 1427-1476.

<sup>162</sup> Mr. Tomlinson, *Hansard* (27.01.1944), vol. 396 cc. 969-71.

<sup>163</sup> See *Hansard* (27.01.1944), vol. 396 cc. 877-1028; (04.02.1944), vol. 396, cc. 1546-1576; (01.03.1944), vol. 397, cc. 1427-1476; Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, (1944). *Hansard* (01.03.1944), vol. 397, cc. 1475.

the Minister was asked about the general development of the provisions of the DPEA the following month.<sup>164</sup> There were several further discussions regarding the other provisions of the DPEA, but no further mention of sheltered employment prior to the announcement in the Commons of the formation of the Board of Directors of Remploy on 3 May 1945.<sup>165</sup> This particular event has not been documented in Hansard, which has no record of the Commons sitting on this date.<sup>166</sup> There is only a mention of the announcement in *The Times* the following day.<sup>167</sup> It is not clear therefore if this announcement drew any additional comments from MPs. In any case these are the only mentions of the scheme prior to the first meeting of the Remploy Board later in the month.<sup>168</sup> The next recorded mention of Remploy was not until 9 October 1945, after the war and the election of the Labour government, when George Isaacs, the new Minister for Labour, was asked about the implementation of the DPEA, in which part of his answer included:

With regard to the provision of employment under sheltered conditions for those who, after registering, are found to be incapable of employment under ordinary conditions, a scheme has been prepared for assisting voluntary organisations making such provisions and the Disabled Persons Employment Corporation which was established in April 1945, is arranging to open special workshops.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Mr. R. Duckworth, *Hansard* (24.03.1944), vol. 398, cc. 1215; Mr. E. Bevin, *Hansard* (24.03.1944), vol. 398, cc. 1215; Mr. E. Bevin, *Hansard* (27.04.1944), vol. 399, cc. 906.

<sup>165</sup> On 14 December 1944, Bevin was asked when the Act would be brought into force, Mr. Bevin, *Hansard* (14.12.1944), vol. 406, cc. 1321; Mr Bellenger, *Hansard* (21.12.1944), vol. 406, cc. 1923-4. On 1<sup>st</sup> March 1945, Bevin responded to a question about the setting up of the register, Mr Bevin, *Hansard* (01.03.1945), vol. 408, cc. 1531; See also TNA BM 8/1.

<sup>166</sup> TNA LAB 20/120, 'Note from Ernest Bevin' (01.05.1945); *Hansard* only has records for the House of Lords during May up until 29 May 1945, the announcement does not appear to have been made hereafter. On 10 May 1945, Bevin received a letter from Sir Ian Fraser referring to a 'reply to Herbert Williams in the House of the 19 April about the Disabled Persons Employment Corporation', however according to Hansard the Commons did not sit on this day either, TNA LAB 20/120, 'Note to Ernest Bevin from Sir Ian Fraser' (10.05.1945).

<sup>167</sup> 'Parliament', *The Times* (04.05.1945).

<sup>168</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'First Meeting of the Board' (30.05.1945).

<sup>169</sup> Mr. Isaacs *Hansard* (09.10.1945), vol. 414, cc. 108-9.

It is apparent therefore, that proceedings in both Houses of Parliament involved no meaningful consideration of the scheme of sheltered employment.

Contrary then to what is considered to be the story of the development of Remploy within the DPEA, we can see the extremely limited role played by the various committees and Parliament. The priority in all these cases was clearly the other measures of the DPEA, which would cater for a greater number of people, and on the political issue of preference for ex-service personnel. With the sheltered employment scheme largely neglected in comparison to the other measures of the DPEA in these areas, we must look elsewhere for the driving force behind the creation of Remploy.

#### Sheltered Employment in the Development of the DPEA: The Role of Industry and Segregation

The most detailed consideration of the creation of Remploy has remained that proposed by Bolderson in her focus on the creation of the DPEA.<sup>170</sup> It is from the need to secure the backing of industry for the other measures of the Act that Bolderson saw the true origins of Remploy. In her view, the sheltered employment scheme was developed as a means to allay fears that the other measures, chiefly the mandatory quota, would result in unproductive workers being forced upon industry.<sup>171</sup> The cooperation of industry in the measures of the DPEA was therefore ‘bought’ at the expense of segregating ‘non-productive’ workers in sheltered employment. It was this view which was subsequently adopted by Borsay in her influential study on disability in Britain, which underpinned her negative depiction of sheltered

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<sup>170</sup> H. Bolderson, ‘The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance’, pp. 169-186; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*.

<sup>171</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 109; ‘The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance’, pp. 178-9.



employment as one of ‘segregated employment’, and of the policies of the DPEA as having failed disabled people as part of her wider narrative of discrimination and marginalisation.<sup>172</sup>

In Bolderson’s account, this bargain with industry began with the deliberations of the Tomlinson Committee, which she described as being under the influence of the TUC, as ‘when opinion was divided on the committee as to the degree of fitness which a man should attain before he was placed in employment...opposition from the TUC led it to conclude that “unfit workers should not go into competition with the fit”’.<sup>173</sup> For this statement Bolderson cited Tomlinson ‘explaining the committee’s decisions to the Factory Welfare Advisory Board’ on 12 January 1943, in document ‘FWB (43) 1’, file ‘LAB 14/429’ at The National Archives.<sup>174</sup> However, ‘FWB (43) 1’ is a note which explains that copies of the report have been circulated to the Board and which draws attention to certain pertinent areas to focus upon.<sup>175</sup> The report of the committee was not discussed until the meeting on the 9 March 1943, and the notion that ‘unfit workers should not go into competition with the fit’ was not uttered.<sup>176</sup> It is unclear therefore where this remark came from.

The record of the meeting of the Factory and Welfare Advisory Board on the 9 March 1943, in which the report of the Tomlinson Committee was discussed, noted that ‘the Joint Consultative Committee of the TUC and British Employer’s Confederation

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<sup>172</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 135 for which she cites Bolderson, ‘The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance’, n. 86.

<sup>173</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 109.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109, n. 18.

<sup>175</sup> TNA LAB 14/429, Factory and Welfare Advisory Board, ‘Tomlinson Committee Report, F.W.B. (43)1’.

<sup>176</sup> TNA LAB 14/429, Factory and Welfare Advisory Board, ‘Minutes of the Thirty-Seventh Meeting’ (09.03.1943).

(BEC) had set up a sub-committee to examine points raised in the Report'.<sup>177</sup> One member of the Board asked 'whether it was right to ask industry to engage cripples in view of their probably cramping affect on production'.<sup>178</sup> Tomlinson replied that 'it was the State's responsibility to see that a fair proportion of those with permanent injuries (however caused) should be absorbed into industry, and that industrial employers should take their fair share, whether the injury in the particular case was caused in industry or not'.<sup>179</sup> He then noted that 'some of course, could never be returned to ordinary employment and for these sheltered special occupations would have to be found'.<sup>180</sup> We should not, however, simply take this as meaning that this is for the benefit of industry, as subsequent comments reflected instead a concern that the pressure to compete in open employment could prove detrimental to the disabled worker. Tomlinson proceeded to mention the sheltered village settlement at Papworth, which was engaged in 'competitive' industry, which he was concerned could 'entail a dangerous over-exertion on the part of the worker'.<sup>181</sup> Though he did then note that 'another difficulty arising from having fit and unfit workers together was that Union squabbles arose from the fit workers' contending that their unfit colleagues were not 100% producing agents'.<sup>182</sup> So while there was an awareness from Tomlinson that sheltered establishments could prevent the difficulties of having those who would not be '100%' productive from lowering production and leading to conflict with unions, there was also a clear concern of over-exertion in an attempt to remain competitive being a problem, something which was especially highlighted in cases of Tuberculosis

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

(TB).<sup>183</sup> Such a view was consistent with the extract of a report which the committee had considered at an earlier meeting by Dr. Macauley, Medical Officer of Health to the Middlesex County Council, on the dangerous effects of over-exertion on patients in sanatoria.<sup>184</sup>

Whilst it was certainly the case that the Tomlinson Committee had emphasised the importance of securing the agreement and co-operation ‘of both sides of industry’ in all aspects of its recommendations, there is no evidence that this was unbalanced to favour industry entirely at the expense of the severely disabled.<sup>185</sup> Indeed, it is notable that the final Tomlinson Report explained that the development of production in the sheltered employment scheme would undoubtedly disadvantage employers who also made those products.<sup>186</sup> The report demanded however, that this be recognised ‘as an essential feature of any national scheme to secure satisfactory employment for disabled persons who cannot find a place in ordinary industry’.<sup>187</sup> In this case it was industry that would have to potentially suffer in order to provide sheltered employment for the severely disabled.

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-Departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled People, ‘Note by the Joint Secretaries on the Resettlement of Tuberculous Persons: R.D.16’ (13.05.1942). The extract concludes: ‘The factories causing relapse are many, but I am convinced that a potent complex factor is the attempt, which force of economic circumstances compels a half-cured man to make, to compete on equal terms in the industrial market with me who are a hundred per cent fit’.

<sup>185</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-Departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Draft additional paragraphs for the Report, Vocational Training, R.D.21’; Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Minutes of the Eleventh Meeting’ (17.06.1942). *Report of Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 6415 (1943), para. 89, p. 34, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 15/05/2018).

<sup>186</sup> *Report of Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 6415 (1943), para. 91, pp. 34-5, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 15/05/2018).

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

Bolderson also cited the discussion of the draft Bill of the DPEA between the TUC and BEC in support of her argument. Proposals for the various elements of the Bill were sent to the BEC and the TUC on 23 April 1943 for them to consider.<sup>188</sup> Unfortunately the BEC was delayed in considering them and so a draft of the Bill was produced before the observations of industry could be given.<sup>189</sup> The TUC and BEC met together on the 6 July 1943 and again on the 24 August 1943, and with government representatives on 15 September 1943 and the 12 October 1943.<sup>190</sup> During the September meeting with government, both the TUC and the BEC agreed that those disabled people ‘below a reasonable standard of employability’ should not be a ‘burden’ for industry, but should be the responsibility of the state.<sup>191</sup> In earlier discussions they had noted this would be the function of the sheltered employment scheme.<sup>192</sup> This was confirmed to be the case by Tomlinson, who was chairing the meeting, and who ‘emphasised that there was no intention to force employers to take on persons who were so incapacitated that they would be merely “passengers” in industry’.<sup>193</sup> Industry would be ‘expected to employ those who were capable of rendering reasonably effective service’.<sup>194</sup> Those who were not able to do this would be ‘catered for under the sheltered employment scheme’.<sup>195</sup> For Bolderson this

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<sup>188</sup> TNA LAB 20/91, ‘Note to T.W. Phillips from TUC’ (29.04.1943); ‘Note to T.W. Phillips from BEC’ (27.04.1943).

<sup>189</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*; p. 112, suggests that this was a genuine delay due to workload. TNA LAB 20/91, ‘Note to Mr. Hetherington’ (26.07.1943); ‘Notes from Sir. T.W. Phillips to Sir John Forbes Watson and Sir Walter Citrine’ (30.07.1943); Joint Consultative Committee, ‘Head of Bill providing for Employment of Disabled Persons’.

<sup>190</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*; p. 112.

<sup>191</sup> TNA LAB 20/91, ‘Note of a discussion with Representatives of the British Employers’ Confederation and the Trades Union Congress on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1943, on the Tomlinson Committee Report and the draft proposals for a Bill based on that Report’ (15.09.1943).

<sup>192</sup> TNA LAB 20/91, ‘Note of discussions between Representatives of the British Employers’ Confederation and the TUC on the Ministry of Labour’s proposals for implementing the Tomlinson Report’.

<sup>193</sup> TNA LAB 20/91, ‘Note of a discussion with Representatives of the British Employers’ Confederation and the Trades Union Congress on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1943, on the Tomlinson Committee Report and the draft proposals for a Bill based on that Report’ (15.09.1943).

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

equated to agreement with industry on the overall draft bill having been ‘bought at the price of dividing disabled people into “effective” workers – able to take their place in open employment – and ineffective workers for whom sheltered employment would be provided’.<sup>196</sup>

For Bolderson therefore, the provision of sheltered employment was the result of a deal with industry. This does not appear to be the case however. The idea for a scheme of sheltered employment did not come from industry, but from the MOL. The draft Bill had been produced without input from industry and the BEC and TUC had only agreed with these proposals.<sup>197</sup> The BEC and TUC simply recognised, correctly, that it would also mean that industry would not shoulder the ‘burden’ of workers who were considered unproductive. This was a result, not a cause, of the scheme, as in considering the role of sheltered employment, the Tomlinson Committee had taken evidence that trying to compete in open industry was bad for these disabled men. This view was also consistent with those expressed by existing voluntary workshops and those groups representing disabled people, who, as has been shown, were actively campaigning for further sheltered employment provision.<sup>198</sup> Whatever one might now think of the concept of sheltered employment, there is no evidence that in advocating a national scheme, the MOL was simply sacrificing the needs of the disabled people who would be employed in it in order to placate industry. This explanation for the creation of Remploy cannot bear the kind of detailed examination of the evidence

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<sup>196</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 113; ‘The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance’.

<sup>197</sup> TNA LAB 20/91, ‘Note of Discussion with Representatives of the British Employers’ Confederation and the Trades Unions Congress on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1943, on the Draft Heads of Bill Providing for Employment of Disabled Persons’ (12.10.1943); ‘Minute extract of Mr Wiles’, (17.09.1943).

<sup>198</sup> ‘Unemployment Insurance’, *The Times* (05.03.1932); ‘Occupational Therapy’, *The Times* (06.09.1937); ‘A Thought for Armistice Day’, *The Manchester Guardian* (11.11.1938); ‘War-Disabled Men’s Pensions’, *The Manchester Guardian* (04.04.1938); ‘Employment for Disabled’, *The Manchester Guardian* (18.08.1945).

applied here. Once again therefore, we must look elsewhere for the driving force behind Remploy's creation.

### Sheltered Employment in the Development of the DPEA: The Role of Bevin and the MOL

After an already long and distinguished career as a Trade Union leader, Ernest Bevin played a crucial role as the wartime Minister of Labour, in maximising the efficiency of industry for the war effort.<sup>199</sup> Notably successful in achieving a higher level of civilian mobilization in industry than could be matched by any of the other nations at war, Bevin worked tirelessly in this role.<sup>200</sup> In doing so he was outspoken in his belief that the efforts of workers should not go unrewarded, and pushed for economic and social reform as both a wartime and post-war priority.<sup>201</sup> Bevin has been described as a minister who was keen to take personal responsibility for matters and as someone 'quick to centralise much power in his own hands'.<sup>202</sup> The importance of the role played by Bevin in the creation of the DPEA was recognised by his contemporaries and has long been noted by academics.<sup>203</sup> It was also Bevin who played the key role in ensuring that the provisions of the Act were to apply to all disabled people, regardless of the cause of disability.<sup>204</sup> That Bevin had a keen interest in the issue of rehabilitation and the employment of the disabled has been remarked upon by

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<sup>199</sup> Wrigley, 'Bevin, Ernest (1881–1951)'.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Page, *Revisiting the Welfare State*, pp. 20-2.

<sup>202</sup> Wrigley, 'Bevin, Ernest (1881–1951)'.

<sup>203</sup> For contemporaries see discussions in Hansard on the Bill. For scholars see, Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, pp. 224-5; M. Stephens, *Ernest Bevin: Unskilled Labourer and World Statesman 1881-1951* (London, TGWU, 1981), pp. 102-3; A. Bullock, *The Life & Times of Ernest Bevin: Volume Two, Minister of Labour 1940-1945* (London, Heinemann, 1967), pp. 288-91; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 58; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 107-21; Bolderson, 'The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance', pp. 175-7.

<sup>204</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, 'Terms of Reference' (1942); Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 106; 'The Disabled', *The Times* (06.12.1943).

scholars such as Alan Bullock, who described the DPEA as legislation which was ‘very close to Bevin’s heart’.<sup>205</sup> Indeed in correspondence with Lord Rushcliffe, a Conservative MP who had served as Minister of Labour in Ramsay MacDonald’s cross-party National Government in 1931 and who sat on the *Voluntary Service Advisory Committee*, both he and Bevin noted the latter’s ‘special interest’ in the issue, with Rushcliffe sending him a memorandum from the *Central Council for the Care of Cripples* on the subject of rehabilitation and training.<sup>206</sup> It was a long-standing interest which, by Bevin’s own admission, was generated by his years working as a Trade Union official, fighting to get compensation for injured workers and witnessing the plight of those too disabled to continue to work.<sup>207</sup> What has not been noted until now is that the importance of Bevin in the creation of Remploi specifically, is even more apparent. A significant role was played by Bevin and his MOL, both in guiding his vision of a sheltered employment scheme through the various committees and discussions with industry into the DPEA, and in the subsequent forming of the company.

Following the outbreak of the Second World War, the first mention of the idea of a scheme of sheltered employment came from Bevin himself in 1941. On 27 February, an MOL official, Mr. Tribe, attempted to clarify the intentions of the Minister regarding rehabilitation schemes to take to the inter-departmental committee which

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<sup>205</sup> Bullock, *The Life & Times of Ernest Bevin*, p. 288.

<sup>206</sup> TNA LAB 20/48, ‘Letter from Lord Rushcliffe’ (17.10.1940); ‘Letter from Mr. Bevin’ (1940); ‘Memorandum on the Composition and Functions of a Rehabilitation Board for War Casualties (as proposed by Dame Agnes Hunt’s letter to ‘The Times’ of August 28<sup>th</sup> (27.09.1940). R. Davison & M. Brodie, ‘Betberton, Henry Bucknall, Baron Rushcliffe (1872–1949), politician’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (23.09.2004), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-30739> (accessed 24/08/2019).

<sup>207</sup> Mr. Ernest Bevin, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, col. 1345.

was to consider them.<sup>208</sup> Whilst this discussion focused primarily on aspects of treatment and training, the final point raised saw the emergence of the idea which was to become Remploy. Bevin informed Tribe that ‘consideration should be given to a revision of our policy for securing employment for disabled persons. All employers should be compelled to employ a quota of such persons and if necessary the State should set up its own factories for the employment of those who are more seriously disabled’.<sup>209</sup> Bevin noted however, that this was not as urgent as immediate provision for the treatment and rehabilitation of the war disabled, and was linked closely to post-war reconstruction.<sup>210</sup> So whilst Bevin’s immediate priority was on the establishment of what would become the ‘Interim Scheme’, there was here, for the first time during the discussions which took place during the Second World War, the idea of state run factories for the severely disabled.<sup>211</sup>

Following this, it was Bevin who also drove the issue of sheltered employment through the Tomlinson Committee. The Committee itself came about as a result of Bevin’s continued pressure, and was provided with direction as to what to consider for the sheltered employment scheme.<sup>212</sup> Prior to its first meeting, the Committee’s Joint Secretaries, Mr. Hartwell from the Ministry of Health and Mr. Gomme from the

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<sup>208</sup> TNA LAB 20/2, ‘Note by F.N. Tribe’ (27.02.1941). In which he states ‘I discussed the matter shortly with the Minister after the meeting and have attempted in the attached note to set out the general lines on which I think he wishes us to proceed’.

<sup>209</sup> TNA LAB 20/2, ‘Re-Habilitation of Disabled Persons’ (27.02.1941).

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> For discussion of the Interim Scheme, see Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 103, who suggests that for Bevin it was always intended to lead to more permanent provision.

<sup>212</sup> TNA CAB 67/9/160, ‘Rehabilitation, Training and Employment of Disabled Persons: Note by the Minister of Labour and National Service’ (31.12.1941). The committee comprised members of the Ministries of Labour, Health, and Pensions as well as the Board of Education, the Scottish Office, the Treasury, and the Minister without Portfolio and, from the third meeting onwards, the Home Office, TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Terms of Reference’ (1942). It also included Mr. R.E Gomme of the Ministry of Labour and Mr. H.R. Hartwell from the Ministry of Health as Joint Secretaries to the Committee, TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Minutes of the Third Meeting’ (26.02.1942).



MOL, highlighted the need for sheltered employment in two memoranda.<sup>213</sup> One of these listed those groups who were not currently provided for through the Interim Scheme, including those requiring ‘employment under sheltered conditions or on special terms’.<sup>214</sup> Another, drew attention to the question of the provision for those ‘who cannot earn an economic wage or become self-supporting’, and suggested possible solutions ‘which the Committee will wish to consider’.<sup>215</sup> Three suggestions were given, firstly, ‘direct employment in State factories’, alternatively, ‘employment subsidised from national funds, in specialised institutions of a semi-charitable character’, and finally, ‘employment in private industry subsidised from national funds’.<sup>216</sup> As has been noted, the Tomlinson Committee held only limited discussions on the issue, with changes of emphasis as to the place of a national government scheme, but finally recommended the setting up of one. It is likely that in doing so it was simply following the overall wishes of Bevin. The Ince Committee subsequently placed the scheme firmly in the hands of the MOL.<sup>217</sup> The sheltered employment scheme was therefore left to the MOL to shape into the DPEA.

Bevin’s role is similarly evident in ensuring the swift passage of the DPEA at Bill stage during the liaison process with the BEC and TUC throughout 1943.<sup>218</sup> Bevin urged swift action, noting ‘that he was anxious to have the proposals in the [Tomlinson] Report which require legislation put in the form of heads of a Bill as

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<sup>213</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons, ‘Note by the Joint Secretaries: R.D.1’ (07.01.1942).

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> TNA LAB 20/87, Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘Minutes of the Second Meeting’ (04.03.1943); Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘Minutes of the Seventh Meeting’ (17.09.1943); TNA LAB 20/84, Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘Note by the Ministry of Labour and National Service, Production work for Undertakings providing sheltered employment for severely disabled persons: S.R.R.C.28’.

<sup>218</sup> TNA LAB 20/91, ‘Note to T.W. Phillips from TUC’ (29.04.1943); ‘Note to T.W. Phillips from BEC’ (27.04.1943).

soon as possible and he would be glad to have the help of the two sides in this matter'.<sup>219</sup> Concerned about the BEC's delay in considering the proposals, Bevin asked the Ince Committee to exert pressure on the Director of the BEC, Sir John Forbes Watson, in order to speed things up.<sup>220</sup> This was followed by letters to the BEC expressing the Minister's impatience and demand for prompt consideration.<sup>221</sup> In July, Bevin decided to force the issue by pushing ahead with a draft of the Bill, with Sir John informed that Bevin could not wait any longer for the two sides of industry to make their observations.<sup>222</sup> Bevin had spoken to Sir John and explained that his anxiety to move quickly was in order 'to see that justice is done to the men who have already been disabled in this war'.<sup>223</sup>

The terms of the DPEA itself placed the enacting of the sheltered employment scheme firmly in the hands of the Minister of Labour. 'Section 15' of the Act which contained the sheltered employment scheme, stated that the 'nature of the facilities to be provided under this section shall be such as the Minister may determine', which could include 'one or more companies which may be formed for that purpose and incorporated under the Companies Act, 1929'.<sup>224</sup> At the time of the Act coming into being, the war was still ongoing and there was no intention for all the measures to be enacted right away.<sup>225</sup> Bevin, however, wanted the creation of the company for

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<sup>219</sup> TNA LAB 20/91, 'Extract from minutes of 36<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee; Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee Note 5.A'.

<sup>220</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 112, suggests that this was a genuine delay due to workload. TNA LAB 20/91, 'Note to Mr. Hetherington' (19.06.1943).

<sup>221</sup> TNA LAB 20/91, 'Note to Mr. Bowman' (21.06.1943); 'Notes from Sir. T.W. Phillips' (21.06.1943).

<sup>222</sup> TNA LAB 20/91, 'Note to Mr. Hetherington' (26.07.1943); 'Note from Sir. T.W. Phillips to Sir John Forbes Watson' (30.07.1943); 'Note from Sir. T.W. Phillips to Sir Walter Citrine' (30.07.1943).

<sup>223</sup> TNA LAB 20/91, 'Note from Sir John Forbes Watson to Sir T.W. Phillips' (29.07.1943).

<sup>224</sup> DPEA, pp. 13-4.

<sup>225</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, 'Note for Discussion with British Employers Confederation and Trades Union Congress'.

sheltered employment to be one of the first.<sup>226</sup> This was not so it could start operating factories, as this would require first the creation of the register of disabled persons which would establish eligibility, but rather it was so that work could begin on establishing the scale and type of provision needed ‘in readiness to receive severely disabled persons as soon as the registration scheme is started’.<sup>227</sup> Bevin himself was greatly involved in the initial establishment of Remploy, including in the appointment of the Board of Directors.<sup>228</sup> Writing to Lord Portal, a highly-distinguished Air Force officer who served as Chief of the Air Staff during the Second World War, who he asked to be Chairman on 11 December 1944, Bevin explained, ‘I am most anxious to have someone who will be in a position to give enough time to this work to ensure that the provision for the disabled which is to be made through the Company shall be made as efficiently and speedily as possible as soon as war circumstances permit’.<sup>229</sup> Again at this stage we see that Bevin would suffer few delays, with hesitancy from the Treasury and the Board of Trade in carrying out various aspects of the formation of

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<sup>226</sup> TNA LAB 20/87, Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘Minutes of the Tenth Meeting’ (04.05.1944); Standing Rehabilitation and Resettlement Committee, ‘Minutes of the Eleventh Meeting’ (06.07.1944); TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note for Discussion with British Employers Confederation and Trades Union Congress’.

<sup>227</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note for Discussion with British Employers Confederation and Trades Union Congress’; TNA LAB 20/113, ‘Note from Mr. Gomme to Mr. Glen’ (01.05.1944); TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note from Miss Norah Hill to All Regional Training Officers’ (06.06.1944); ‘Note from Mr. Gomme to Miss Norah Hill’ (10.05.1944).

<sup>228</sup> Numerous notes in TNA LAB 20/113 indicate discussions with the Minister on all aspects of the establishment of the Corporation, including appointments to the Board. See for example, ‘Note to Mr Glen’ (21.11.1944); ‘Note from Mr Glen’ (22.08.1944). See also TNA LAB 20/120, ‘Note from Sir William Firth to Ernest Bevin’ (04.05.1945); ‘Note to Sir William Firth’ (28.05.1945); ‘Note to Ernest Bevin from Sir Ian Fraser’ (10.05.1945); ‘Note to Mr. Taylor’ (14.05.1945).

<sup>229</sup> TNA LAB 20/113, ‘Note from Ernest Bevin to Lord Portal’ (11.12.1944). D. Richards, ‘Portal, Charles Frederick Algernon, Viscount Portal of Hungerford (1893–1971), air force officer’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (06.01.2011), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-31561> (accessed 03/02/2016).

the company resulting in swift responses which emphasised the Minister's desire 'that the Corporation should get to work as rapidly as possible'.<sup>230</sup>

Though it has since been forgotten, the key role played by Bevin in the creation of Remploy was remembered by some of those directly involved. Remploy themselves honoured him for his role as the first subject of the 'Profile' section in the maiden issue of *Remploy News* in 1952.<sup>231</sup> The importance of Bevin was later noted by George Isaacs, an initial member of the Remploy Board and Bevin's successor as Minister of Labour in Attlee's Labour Government. He recalled in Parliament in 1959 the creation of Remploy, noting that it was Bevin who 'conceived the idea of Remploy', and 'having conceived it, he discovered that he had some brilliant brains in the Ministry to help him to bring it into operation'.<sup>232</sup> He then noted that following the passing of the DPEA, 'Ernie Bevin set about establishing the corporation'.<sup>233</sup>

Given the central importance of Bevin and his MOL in creating Remploy, it is important to note that the motives behind this cause us to further discard the idea of Bolderson and Borsay that Remploy and sheltered employment were simply about segregation and the desires of industry. Bevin justified his insistence on a comprehensive rehabilitation and employment scheme on both the loss of manpower for the country if disabled people did not work, and through the idea that gaining employment would, for the disabled persons also mean 'their restoration to a fuller

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<sup>230</sup> TNA LAB 20/113, 'Note to Mr Wiles' (08.03.1945); 'Note from Mr Wiles' (09.03.1945); 'Note to Mr Wiles' (28.02.1945); 'Note from Mr Dalton to Mr Hale' (24.01.1945); 'Note to Mr Hale' (28.04.1945); 'Note to Mr M. Barton' (22.03.1945). For 'Articles of Association' see TNA BM 4/1.

<sup>231</sup> 'Profile', *Remploy News*, 1 (December, 1952).

<sup>232</sup> Mr Isaacs, *Hansard* (21.07.1959), vol. 609, cc. 1135-94.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*

life'.<sup>234</sup> Similarly in outlining the proposed scheme in the Commons, Bevin's Parliamentary Secretary, Tomlinson echoed these remarks noting the ultimate aim of assisting disabled people wherever possible 'to live a full, free and happy life'.<sup>235</sup> Bevin also noted that he was motivated by his years of experience seeing the lack of welfare and employment for disabled workers, stating 'I have seen these men crippled in our streets, and I have had it on my conscience'.<sup>236</sup> There is no reason to doubt his motives in this case.

It is clear, therefore, that Bevin played the key role in the creation of Remploy. It was Bevin who placed his vision of a national state scheme of sheltered employment on the agenda and drove the issue through the deliberations of the committees and discussions with industry. The DPEA itself left the establishment of the scheme to the Minister of Labour, and Bevin did not shirk from this task. The question of how to implement Remploy and the form it should take remained to be decided however. It is the question of the degree to which this was determined prior to the company beginning to operate that this chapter will now turn.

### Forming Remploy: A Predetermined Purpose?

A fundamental assumption about Remploy has been that it was a coherent, monolithic scheme which appeared fully formed and with a determined purpose and *modus operandi*.<sup>237</sup> Whilst the vision of a national state scheme of sheltered employment was being championed by Bevin and the MOL through to the passing of the DPEA,

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<sup>234</sup> TNA CAB 71/5, 'Minister of Labour and National Service, Memorandum to Lord President's Committee, LP(41)182' (4.11.1941).

<sup>235</sup> Mr. Tomlinson, *Hansard*, (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1260.

<sup>236</sup> Mr. Bevin, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1345-1346.

<sup>237</sup> Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 55-6; Bolderson, 'The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance', p. 178; Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 71.

the specifics of what kind of scheme it would be and how it would function remained unresolved.<sup>238</sup> Miss Norah Hill, a MOL official, was tasked with preparing a potential outline for the scheme in June 1944.<sup>239</sup> This focused mainly on the ‘activities of the Company once it is formed’ and touched on a wide range of areas including suggestions regarding eligibility, wages and existing voluntary provision.<sup>240</sup> In terms of the ‘Provision to be made under the Company’, the outline suggested that this would involve the creation of ‘a network of Centres each serving a restricted area’.<sup>241</sup> These centres would be residential, though they would also accommodate daily workers, and would consist of workshops, hostel, offices and storerooms.<sup>242</sup> Acknowledging that disabled people would not want to be moved too far from their communities, the outline recommended that the centres be situated ‘in or near towns’ and possibly include provision to transport those workers unable to use public transport.<sup>243</sup> In terms of the work itself, the outline recommended that the focus should be given to light industries using ‘non-bulky materials’ in ‘clean operation’, and if possible, which lend themselves to ‘sitting work’.<sup>244</sup> Such general recommendations were not intended to be binding and indeed would later be extensively modified.

A key consideration at this stage was attempting to establish the scale of likely need for the scheme. In considering this, while acknowledging the difficulty in obtaining reliable figures, the outline estimated that ‘about 1,500 severely disabled persons’

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<sup>238</sup> ‘Rehabilitation Plans’, *The Times* (03.05.1943).

<sup>239</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note from Miss Norah Hill to Mr Gomme’ (23.05.1944); ‘Note from Miss N. Hill’ (21.06.1944); ‘Employment Under Special Conditions, Outline of a Scheme under Section 15 of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, E.M.D. 5565’ (June, 1944).

<sup>240</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Employment Under Special Conditions, Outline of a Scheme under Section 15 of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, E.M.D. 5565’ (June, 1944).

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*

required sheltered employment.<sup>245</sup> It was noted however, that ‘it must be recognised that the Company will probably only learn the true extent of the problem after it has commenced its activities, or at any rate after a trial run in one or two areas’.<sup>246</sup> Hill wrote to the MOL regional officers in June 1944 for ‘general observations and advice’ and a ‘considered estimate’ of the numbers requiring sheltered employment to aid in the preparation of the company.<sup>247</sup> To begin with, Hill requested for each region ‘some figures as to the number in the area not at present provided for and likely to need, and qualify for, the special facilities under Section 15’, and to have these divided into ‘(a) those willing to work in a residential sheltered workshops, (b) those willing to attend a workshop within daily travelling distance, (c) those capable only of employment in their own homes’.<sup>248</sup> The MOL received a wide range of responses.<sup>249</sup> The Scotland Regional Office, for example gave detailed figures which estimated that for category ‘(a)’ there would be ‘742 men’, ‘154 women’, ‘23 juveniles’; for category ‘(b)’ ‘2927 men’, ‘599 women’ and ‘116 juveniles’; and for category ‘(c)’ ‘506 men’, ‘265 women’ and ‘151 juveniles’.<sup>250</sup> Whereas, the Wales Regional Office estimated for category ‘(a)’ ‘85 persons’; for ‘(b)’ ‘440 persons’; and for ‘(c)’ ‘70 persons’.<sup>251</sup>

Overall, the responses indicated two things: firstly, that the potential extent of the problem was likely far larger than previously envisaged; and secondly, that the

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<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note from Miss N. Hill to All Regional Training Officers’ (06.06.1944); ‘Note from Miss N. Hill to Mr Gomme’ (23.05.1944).

<sup>248</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note from Miss N. Hill to All Regional Training Officers’ (06.06.1944).

<sup>249</sup> For overview of responses and table see TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Summary of Replies from T.R.O.’s re. provision to be made under Section 15 of the Act’ (13.07.1944).

<sup>250</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note to Miss N. Hill’ (12.06.1944); ‘Note to Miss N. Hill’ (03.08.1944).

<sup>251</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note to Miss N. Hill’ (16.06.1944).

preference was overwhelmingly for non-residential workshops.<sup>252</sup> In terms of the former, the scale of the problem clearly took the MOL by surprise, especially with regards to Scotland.<sup>253</sup> In a note to another MOL official, Hill exclaimed that ‘we must do something to provide work for these people, even if in advance of the general scheme’.<sup>254</sup> She suggested appointing a Managing Director of the Company ‘at once and turn him loose on Scotland to experiment’.<sup>255</sup> In terms of the type of centre to be established, Hill noted that ‘it seems fairly clear from the replies in general that there will have to be a large number of small workshops within daily travelling distance’.<sup>256</sup> The issue was discussed further with Mr Watson-Smyth, head of the MOL’s training schemes, on the 7 July 1944, who ‘considered that the vast majority of men would prefer to remain in their own homes and attend a non-residential centre’.<sup>257</sup> The understanding of the MOL was therefore established that the scheme should not involve residential settlement, but rather local centres. This view was reflected once Remploy began to operate and appears to be the only example of any real pre-determined policy.

As time went on without any firm resolutions on many of the other specifics of the company, a concerned Hill wrote to fellow MOL official, Mr. Gomme, on the 1 September 1944:

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid.; TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note to Miss N. Hill’ (20.06.1944); ‘Note to Miss N. Hill’ (31.08.1944); ‘Note to Miss N. Hill’ (22.06.1944); ‘Note to Miss N. Hill’ (23.06.1944); ‘Note to Miss N. Hill’ (30.06.1944); ‘Note to Miss N. Hill’ (11.07.1944); ‘Note to Miss N. Hill’ (30.06.1944); ‘Note to Miss N. Hill’ (31.07.1944).

<sup>253</sup> This was discussed further in correspondence between Miss Hill and Mr. Card of the Scotland Regional Office; TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note to Mr. Card’ (08.08.1944); ‘Note to Miss N. Hill’ (29.08.1944).

<sup>254</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note from Miss N. Hill’ (30.08.1944).

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note from Miss N. Hill to Mr. Greenhough’ (1944).

<sup>257</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, ‘Note from Miss N. Hill’ (07.07.1944).



with the approaching end of the War in the western theatre, ought we not to speed up preparations for completing our Scheme under Section 15...I don't know when the Register is likely to be set up, but there is so much to be done, that we ought to go ahead.<sup>258</sup>

Further limited consideration did eventually take place in January the following year, including discussions on general issues such as eligibility, working hours and wages.<sup>259</sup> At this time Gomme wrote to a fellow MOL official with some alarm, explaining that 'we have not yet worked out the policy we intend to follow under Section 15 under the three different heads through which the Section can operate, viz. (i) our own Company; (ii) voluntary bodies, (iii) Local Authorities'.<sup>260</sup> In order to discuss this with the NACED, which had by then been established to consider and monitor the implementation of the various measures contained in the DPEA, Gomme produced a draft memorandum to facilitate discussions.<sup>261</sup> A further meeting of MOL officials took place in April 1945, which considered the similar topics of eligibility and wages.<sup>262</sup> Although the MOL clearly put significant effort into considering how the scheme should run, lacking the expertise and necessary information, it was not able to produce anything really substantial and even what it did produce continued to be in the form of suggestions rather than iron-clad rules. Bevin had informed the NACED that, in terms of the company, 'the Ministry did not claim a monopoly of ideas', and he hoped that they would offer suggestions.<sup>263</sup> Thus it is apparent that

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<sup>258</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, 'Note from Miss N. Hill, Further Points Arising on Section 15' (01.09.1944).

<sup>259</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, 'Questions of a General Nature relating to Legal Points, Policy and Procedure which require consideration in connection with the implementation of Section 15 of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944'.

<sup>260</sup> TNA LAB 20/584, 'Note from Mr Gomme to Mr Taylor' (10.01.1945).

<sup>261</sup> TNA LAB 20/584, 'Draft of Memorandum for National Advisory Council' (January, 1945). At the third meeting of the NACED on 24 May 1945, it was decided to appoint a Standing Committee on Sheltered Employment, TNA LAB 20/1100, NACED, 'Minutes of the Third Meeting' (24.05.1945); NACED, 'Minutes of the Sixth Meeting' (29.11.1945).

<sup>262</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, 'Note of a meeting held in Mr. Taylor's room on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1945' (05.04.1945).

<sup>263</sup> TNA LAB 20/1100, NACED, 'Minutes of the First Meeting' (30.01.1945).

prior to the first meeting of the Remploy Board of Directors on 30 May 1945, many of the specifics of how the company should function remained undecided.<sup>264</sup>

It is evident then, that Remploy was established with few set parameters in mind. Contrary to the orthodox view of the company, it did not originate as a coherent scheme with an established function and mode of working. As this section has shown there was no clear and coherent plan in place for what this scheme would look like and how it would operate beyond the desire to avoid residential settlements. Suggesting that any aspect of the scheme beyond this was pre-determined does not hold with the evidence.

### Conclusions

The analysis of the origins and creation of Remploy undertaken here has served to correct a number of misconceptions about the company, and added it to the current understanding of the birth of the welfare state. Contrary to the popular view of Remploy as a direct and spontaneous response to the conditions of the Second World War, the importance of a number of both long- and short-term factors has been illustrated. The idea of a national government scheme of sheltered employment was not unique to the Second World War and had, along with other key measures of the DPEA, been considered in the aftermath of the previous war. The issue remained prominent throughout the inter-war period as part of the wider campaign for further provision for disabled ex-servicemen. It is clear, therefore, that Remploy did not simply appear as a result of the Second World War, but was the culmination of longer-term aspirations. While attempting to visualise developments in policy had the

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<sup>264</sup> TNA BM 4/1. The Disabled Persons Employment Corporation would be renamed 'Remploy' the following year.

war not occurred is fraught with difficulty, given Bevin's importance in the creation of Remploy, and his insistence that it was not the war which led him to do so, it seems likely that, given the opportunity, he would have formulated a national sheltered employment scheme along the same lines. Whether there would have been sufficient political will to then put the scheme into practice is less clear. While not generating the idea of Remploy, the Second World War does seem to have provided an advantageous moment, both politically and practically, to introduce such a scheme as an element in the wider vision for post-war Britain.

As such, the case of Remploy supports the school of thought espoused by historians such as Laybourn, Lowe, Gladstone and Thane, in which the importance of a number of factors, including, but not limited to, the Second World War, are credited for the creation of the welfare state.<sup>265</sup> This warns us against any notion of considering the war as marking a clean-break with what had gone before. This has important implications, particularly in the current historiography of disability in which 'war' in general, and the two World Wars of the twentieth century in particular, provide much of the focus. While the attention given to the First and Second World Wars by disability historians is understandable and certainly valid, the findings of this chapter demonstrate the importance of longer-term developments in forming disability policy and the need to cross these convenient period divides in twentieth-century disability historiography.

It is apparent that Remploy had its own distinct development, separate from the other aspects of the DPEA. This provides an important challenge to the over-simplification

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<sup>265</sup> See Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, pp. 209, 223; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 16-7; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 51; Thane, 'Voluntary action in Britain since Beveridge'.

of presenting Remploy as simply an aspect of this legislation and thus of presenting the DPEA as a single unified programme providing for 'disabled people' as a homogenous group. Given the nature of the DPEA as a landmark piece of legislation in disability policy, it is important to consider the various aspects it incorporated and how they were formulated and enacted.

In the particular case of Remploy, the role played by Bevin was vitally important and, while the 'great man' view of history is no longer fashionable, it is impossible to ignore the singular role he played. It was he who first considered creating a national scheme of sheltered employment during the war and he and his MOL officials who pushed the measure through the various committees considering the wider DPEA proposals. The sheltered employment scheme proposed in the DPEA reflected his vision and the Act specifically left it to the Minister to enact, a role to which Bevin applied himself fully. The view of the politics of the coalition government, has suggested that the Conservatives were not seen as the party of future peace-time planning, with Churchill's insistence on a focus on the war effort.<sup>266</sup> In the main this has involved discussion of the Beveridge proposals, however, as the case of Remploy has shown, we can also see this in the sphere of disability employment, with the DPEA, and Remploy in particular, resulting from the efforts of Labour's Bevin. More generally, this also highlights the role of individuals such as Bevin in the creation of the welfare state and the continued role of individual political agency in policy development in the twentieth-century.

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<sup>266</sup> A. Thorpe, 'Myth and counter-myth in Second World War British politics', in C. Williams and A. Edwards (eds.) *The Art of the Possible: Politics and Governance in Modern British History, 1885-1997* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2015), p. 129.

The examination undertaken here has also directly challenged the explanation of the origins of Remploy proposed by Bolderson, and accepted by Borsay in her influential study, in which the severely disabled were sacrificed to work in ‘segregated workshops’ in order to placate industry. This was not the case, with industry simply endorsing the measures presented to them and recognising that the provision of sheltered workshops would result in the perceived ‘burden’ of severely disabled workers not falling on them. The notion of the government designing Remploy as a means to segregate the severely disabled is not borne out by the evidence. As this chapter has shown, demand for sheltered employment was widespread and included groups representing disabled people. Similarly, the records consulted in forming this chapter testify to the importance of the ‘welfare’ of severely disabled people in the minds of those forming the sheltered employment scheme. Undoubtedly paternalistic, and whether misplaced or not, and whatever one now thinks of sheltered employment, it was clearly largely considered desirable at the time, and it certainly appears that those involved in Remploy’s creation, including Bevin, believed it was desired by, and in the best interests of, those severely disabled people it was intended to cater for. The case of Remploy therefore supports Anderson’s assertion that the DPEA itself was created with the ‘best interests of disabled people’ in mind, as this was understood at the time, and further highlights the importance of understanding the development of disability policy in its historical context, rather than in terms of current opinion.<sup>267</sup>

Finally, it is apparent that there was no clear inherent direction for the Remploy scheme at its inception. This challenges the prevailing assumption across disciplines

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<sup>267</sup> Anderson, ‘British Women, Disability and the Second World War’, p. 48; Anderson, ‘Turned into Taxpayers’, p. 470.

of Remploi as a coherent, cohesive ‘monolithic’ scheme, as well as instances where scholars have attributed a set function as inherent in its formation. This highlights the danger of seeing the creation of the welfare state as a singular event in which a coherent and static set of measures were considered and enacted. Beyond a general remit to provide a non-residential form of sheltered employment on a national scale, no aspect of Remploi’s purpose was firmly determined prior to its creation. Remploi thus began to operate with fundamental issues about its function unresolved. This underlying issue and the resulting tensions will form the basis for the next chapter.

## **Chapter Three**

### **‘Human vs. Economic’: Establishing the Primary Function of Remploy**

References to Remploy across disciplines have carried the assumption that it operated as a coherent and cohesive unified scheme, and have tended to suggest it did so with a distinct and uncomplicated purpose.<sup>1</sup> However, with no previous detailed examination of Remploy having taken place, there have been differing views on what this primary purpose was. The dominant narrative espoused by Barnes, Shah and Priestley, and implied by Millward, suggests that Remploy’s primary purpose during the period of the classic welfare state was regarded as ‘humanitarian rather than economic’.<sup>2</sup> This ‘golden age’ of Remploy operating as a social service was then brought to an end by the Thatcher governments of the 1980s with a fundamental change of focus to maximising its commercial efficiency. An alternate view has been offered by Lonsdale and Topliss, who argued that an ‘uneasy compromise’ always existed within Remploy between humanitarian and economic considerations.<sup>3</sup> As with virtually all considerations of Remploy, such assertions are made without any detailed examination having taken place and serve to support wider conclusions about the development of disability policy in Britain more generally. As such there is

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy In Britain Since 1750*, p. 135; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 168; Humphries and Gordon, *Out of Sight*, p. 138; Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain*, p. 237; Lande, Lowe and Whiteside, *The Development of the Welfare State 1939-1951*, pp. 203-4; Bridgen and Lowe, *Welfare Policy Under the Conservatives 1951-1964*, p. 262; Shah and Priestley, *Disability and Social Change*, p. 139; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 55-6; Jeffries, ‘The Remploy Resource’, p. 7; Kochan, ‘Remploy: disabled and thriving’; Anderson, ‘Turned into Taxpayers’, p. 469; Else, ‘The Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the Two World Wars’, pp. 276-7; Oliver, *The Politics of Disablement*, pp. 88-9; Hyde, ‘Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s’, pp. 199-215; Reiss, *Blind Workers Against Charity*, p. 140; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 183-5; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 109-110.

<sup>2</sup> Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 73; Shah and Priestley, *Disability and Social Change*, pp. 138-40; Millward, ‘Invalid definitions, invalid responses’, pp. 184-5.

<sup>3</sup> Lonsdale, *Work and Inequality*, p. 138; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 55-7.

fundamentally no understanding of how Remploy was supposed to function in terms of policy, nor how it functioned in reality. With Remploy serving as the prime example of sheltered employment across disciplines it is important that the fundamental question of its function is understood. This chapter will therefore consider the vital question of how Remploy's primary function was understood in this period, prior to the election of the Conservative government in 1979. In considering this issue, as well as examining developments in overall policy, this chapter will also consider how this was reflected at the local factory level. This is important in order to ascertain whether the assumption that Remploy operated as a coherent scheme with a uniform experience across its factories reflects the reality, and in understanding how developments in policy regarding its purpose were felt within the factories themselves.

Consideration of the primary purpose of Remploy in terms of policy will focus upon the views of governments across the period 1945-1979, debates in Parliament, and the view of the Remploy Board of Directors. From examination of the records it is clear that in a similar vein to the nationalised industries, though Remploy's day-to-day running was largely left to the management of the company's Board, there was always a large measure of government control through the MOL in terms of overall policy, with a representative of the Ministry attending every Board meeting, and the Treasury which supervised finances.<sup>4</sup> Remploy never produced a profit at any point during the period considered here, and therefore was always reliant on large amounts of government funding. As such the governments of the period always had to determine the level of financial support given to Remploy and thus had a great deal of influence

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<sup>4</sup> Dorey, *British Politics Since 1945*, p. 9.



on overall policy and the scope of the company's activities. An examination of Remploy therefore provides a new case study to consider in the long-running debate over the existence and extent of a consensus in welfare policy between the two main political parties in the period. Considerations of disability policy in this debate have been few and focused solely upon welfare in terms of cash benefits, with both Millward and Hampton suggesting the existence of a 'consensus in action' with a continuity in terms of the response to the needs of disabled people if not in ideological position.<sup>5</sup> In a recent entry into this debate, Toye has called for historians to move away from the traditional aspects of welfare policy which have been considered and examine previously unexplored areas.<sup>6</sup> This chapter will therefore do so by considering the case of Remploy in this debate for the first time.

This chapter will examine the fundamental question of the primary purpose of Remploy in the period, and how this was developed at a policy and a local level. It will provide the first exploration of the primary role of the scheme based upon detailed archival research which will serve both to clarify the understanding of Remploy and add the case of the company to the debate on the existence of a consensus. This will begin with an examination of policy across three periods. The first section will consider the period of Labour government from 1945 to 1951 as Remploy was being established. This will be continued in the next section for the period of Conservative governments, 1951-1964. The following section will then consider developments from the return of Labour to power in 1964, through to the end of the period considered in this thesis, 1979. The chapter will then examine how

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<sup>5</sup> Millward, 'Invalid definitions, invalid responses', p. 284; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 244.

<sup>6</sup> Toye, 'From "Consensus" to "Common Ground"', p. 23.

Remploy functioned at the local factory level and whether this reflected policy, resulting in a coherent, cohesive national scheme.

### Developments in Policy, 1945-1951

The Remploy Board of Directors met for the first time on 30 May 1945, just over a month before Clement Attlee would come to lead the new Labour government which would establish the welfare state.<sup>7</sup> The Board was initially comprised of eight members, which would grow to twelve by 1951, and was described as ‘representing industry, trade unions and those with knowledge of employing disabled people’.<sup>8</sup> From the beginning, the Board was clear that it felt that the purpose of Remploy was to provide ‘genuine employment’ and establish a viable long-term business for its severely disabled employees. There was to be no place for either charity or simple occupational therapy.<sup>9</sup> For the Board, the aim of the company was ‘to provide productive and worthwhile work’ in an environment which resembled a ‘normal’ industrial operation as closely as possible.<sup>10</sup>

This goal was reflected in the name adopted for the company’s sites. Initial discussions about names included suggestions such as ‘King George’s Workshops’ and ‘New Outlook Workshops’.<sup>11</sup> These were rejected in favour of the term ‘British Factories’ – later ‘Remploy Factories’ – with the deliberate use of ‘factory’ to distinguish them from charitable sheltered employment which commonly used the

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<sup>7</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, ‘A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years’ (March, 1953), p. 3; TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the First meeting of the Board of Directors’ (30.05.1945).

<sup>8</sup> See TNA BM 8/1 and BM 8/2. See also, Remploy Limited, *Golden Jubilee*, (April, 1995).

<sup>9</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, ‘A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years’ (March, 1953), p. 47.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (25.09.1945); ‘Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (31.11.1945).

term ‘workshop’, so as to ‘encourage in the disabled workers the feeling that they were working in an industrial concern of some importance’.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Remploy was to avoid the handicrafts and production of novelty items which were traditionally associated with charitable organisations and instead ‘produce articles which were worth while making and would be up to ordinary standards and thus marketable without any indication that they were the product of disabled persons’.<sup>13</sup> This desire to operate to a large degree on commercial lines can also be seen in the dissatisfaction at the financial performance of the early factories. The Board were concerned about any financial losses from the beginning, with those accruing at the Salford factory, by January 1948 some £757 per month, decried as ‘terrible’ and resulting in Factory Managers being informed that they ‘must do all in their power to avoid losses’.<sup>14</sup>

This is not to suggest that the Board completely disregarded the concept of Remploy’s role as one of a social service. The Board’s understanding appears to have been that the role of Remploy was to provide a viable business *and* a social service and that these were, in fact, one and the same as far as the company’s purpose was concerned. For the Board, the service Remploy offered was in providing ‘genuine employment’ in which the workers could feel they were part of the productivity of the nation in a

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<sup>12</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (29.01.1946); TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, ‘A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years’ (March, 1953), p. 4. For decision to use ‘British Factories’ see TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (29.01.1946). For decision to only use the term ‘Remploy Factory’, see TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (24.09.1946).

<sup>13</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the First Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (30.05.1945).

<sup>14</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (27.01.1948); ‘Minutes of the Thirty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (27.04.1948).

meaningful way and had earned their weekly pay packet as much as anyone else.<sup>15</sup> This concept of ‘genuine employment’ was key for the Board, and to best achieve this they felt the company should begin to establish itself as a robust commercial operation by concentrating provision in the ‘bigger industrial towns’ with ten or twelve factories.<sup>16</sup>

This view appears to have been at odds with the MOL’s emphasis on the purely social service aspect of the scheme, revealing contesting views on the function of Remploy from its beginning. For the MOL, Remploy was to be *the* solution to what was referred to as the ‘problem’ of employment for the severely disabled and was to rapidly establish provision based entirely upon the level of need. Such sentiments were expressed frequently by the new Minister of Labour, George Isaacs, a former chairman of the TUC, who announced the commencement of Remploy to parliament in November 1945 in terms of this perception, stating that it was ‘making preparations to provide sheltered employment to whatever extent may be found necessary’.<sup>17</sup> Isaacs had himself been one of the initial members of the Remploy Board prior to his appointment as Minister of Labour.<sup>18</sup> This was a very brief period of only several months during which time he attended three board meetings. There is no evidence that while a member of the Board he was opposed to the views expressed about the

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<sup>15</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, ‘A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years’ (March, 1953), p. 63.

<sup>16</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the First meeting of the Board of Directors’ (30.05.1945).

<sup>17</sup> Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (08.11.1945), vol. 415, cc. 1590-2; TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (28.08.1945). These sentiments were echoed by Mr. Ellis Smith, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, Mr. Ellis Smith, *Hansard* (22.11.1945), vol. 416, cc. 754. For details of Ellis Smith see J.M. Bellamy and J. Saville (eds.), *Dictionary of Labour Biography, Vol. 9* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 1993), pp. 265-8; H. Pemberton, ‘Isaacs, George Alfred (1883–1979), trade unionist and politician’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (23.09.2004), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-31275> (accessed 22/04/2016).

<sup>18</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (28.08.1945).

desired direction of the company, though it is apparent that once he became Minister, his opinion and that of the Board significantly diverged. When later asked if the factories were suppose to be profitable, Isaacs replied that while it was hoped that they would work at a profit, financial losses were expected and acceptable, noting 'the main purpose of these workshops is to provide employment'.<sup>19</sup> Remploy's function was therefore understood by the MOL as meeting the need for employment for the severely disabled as a social service, rather than as a commercial operation.

With overall policy ultimately determined by the MOL, it was on this basis that far more factories were planned than had been initially envisaged by the Board. Following the opening of the first factory in Bridgend at the end of April 1946, Isaacs revealed initial plans for sixty Remploy factories.<sup>20</sup> The following year, in addition to the six already in operation, a further ninety-eight were proposed.<sup>21</sup> By the end of the year the target given was 107 factories, and in early 1949 this had increased once more to 140.<sup>22</sup> The focus appears to have been on planning a Remploy factory wherever the need had been established or even expressed. It is evident that when dealing with the regular queries from MPs about the possibility of opening a factory in an area, Isaacs consistently answered that one would be forthcoming in the area or close to it, or that it would be considered.<sup>23</sup> This ran contrary to the desires of the

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<sup>19</sup> Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (02.12.1947), vol. 445, cc. 186-8.

<sup>20</sup> Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (03.05.1946), vol. 422, cc. 453-542. Anderson claims the first factory was at Salford, however this was the second factory, Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 183-4. The Bridgend factory opened for workers for the first time on 29 April 1946, see TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Eleventh Meeting of the Board of Directors' (30.04.1946).

<sup>21</sup> Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (17.04.1947), vol. 436, cc. 34-5.

<sup>22</sup> Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (02.12.1947), vol. 445, cc. 186-8; TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Forty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors' (23.02.1949).

<sup>23</sup> See for example; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (05.03.1946), vol. 420, cc. 164; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (17.10.1946), vol. 427, cc. 239; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (22.10.1946), vol. 427, cc. 347-8; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (05.11.1946), vol. 428, cc. 203-4; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard*

Remploy Board for a steady expansion focusing on the larger industrial areas. Nor were the figures for planned factories a final limit, as the Minister suggested that if a need remained in any area, ‘further factories will be established’.<sup>24</sup> His Parliamentary Secretary, Ness Edwards, a trade unionist who had focused on supporting mining communities, went further in stating that the intention was ‘to continue building this type of factory throughout the country until we have provided sheltered employment for all persons requiring it’.<sup>25</sup> Contrary then, to the expressed desire of the Remploy Board to expand slowly as a viable business, the MOL demanded rapid expansion based upon delivering a social service of sheltered employment to all those in need, with no serious consideration at all of commercial efficiency.

It is apparent that MPs overwhelmingly shared the MOL’s view of Remploy. In addition to the regular discussion in the Commons of the general issue of employment for disabled people, questions were frequently asked about the Remploy programme.

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(05.11.1946), vol. 428, cc. 203-4; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (12.12.1946), vol. 431, cc. 1333-4; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (25.02.1947), vol. 433, cc. 266; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (04.03.1947), vol. 434, cc. 29; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (01.04.1947), vol. 435, cc. 287; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (04.03.1947), vol. 436, cc. 34-5; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (08.07.1947), vol. 439, cc. 208-9; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (11.07.1947), vol. 439, cc. 252; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (05.08.1947), vol. 441, cc. 1267-8; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (05.08.1947), vol. 441, cc. 130-1; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (11.11.1947), vol. 444, cc. 38-9; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (06.04.1948), vol. 449, cc. 10; Mr. Ness Edwards, *Hansard* (22.06.1948), vol. 452, cc. 115; Mr. Ness Edwards, *Hansard* (29.06.1948), vol. 452, cc. 189; Mr. Ness Edwards, *Hansard* (16.12.1948), vol. 459, cc. 185; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (18.01.1949), vol. 460, cc. 15; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (25.01.1949), vol. 460, cc. 108, the table with the information has mistakenly been placed in vol. 460, cc. 107-8 (25.01.1949); Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (15.02.1949), vol. 461, cc. 133-4, the table with the information has mistakenly been placed in vol. 461, cc. 132-3 (15.02.1949); Mr. Key, *Hansard* (08.03.1949), vol. 462, cc. 989; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard*, (29.03.1949), the Hansard website does not contain a record for 17 May 1949, but the search function reveals a statement by Isaacs.

<sup>24</sup> Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (26.11.1946), vol. 430, cc. 1388-9.

<sup>25</sup> Mr. Ness Edwards, *Hansard* (21.03.1947), vol. 435, cc. 816-26. See also Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (03.02.1948), vol. 446, cc. 1613-5; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (25.03.1948), vol. 448, cc. 361; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (13.07.1948), vol. 453, cc. 1004; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (30.11.1948), vol. 458, cc. 162; Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (22.03.1949), vol. 463, cc. 181; TNA LAB 20/453, MOL, ‘Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944: Memorandum for Disablement Advisory Committees, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Ltd, D.A.C.Memo. No.18’ (November, 1948). B. Curtis, ‘Edwards, Onesimus [Ness] (1897–1968), trade unionist and politician’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (19.05.2011), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-66092> (accessed 15/08/2019).

Following the official opening ceremony for the Bridgend Factory in November 1946, a much publicised occasion attended by Isaacs, the calls for more factories began in earnest and continued with regularity for the next several years.<sup>26</sup> March 1947, for example, saw no less than seven instances of MPs demanding further Remploy Factories.<sup>27</sup> Alongside these were expressions of frustration at what was seen as the slow pace of development of the factory programme. The Labour MP for Neath, Mr. D.J. Williams, summed up what appears to have been a general feeling among many concerning the Remploy Factories, when he complained in February 1949 that ‘there are not enough of them and they have been far too slowly completed’.<sup>28</sup> The demand was for rapid expansion in order to prevent severely disabled people from being left to ‘rot in their cottages’.<sup>29</sup> Continuous pressure was placed upon Remploy and the MOL from MPs, encouraged by the responses of the latter, to provide more factories to meet the need.<sup>30</sup> It is noteworthy that the overwhelming majority of the interest expressed in Remploy, in terms of official parliamentary proceedings recorded in Hansard, came from Labour MPs, with only a handful of queries from Conservatives.<sup>31</sup> Labour did enjoy a large majority in government at this time, with 393 MPs compared to the 213 Conservatives, meaning there were therefore more

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<sup>26</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (24.09.1946). From October 1946 to June 1949 there are over fifty instances recorded in Hansard of questions being asked about Remploy provision, the majority of occasions are MPs requesting a factory for an area, and subsequent updates upon the progress of establishing them.

<sup>27</sup> Mr. Wilkes, *Hansard* (04.03.1947), vol. 434, cc. 29; Mr. David Thomas, *Hansard* (10.03.1947), vol. 434, cc. 963-1094; Mr. Wilkes, *Hansard* (17.03.1947), vol. 435, cc. 152-64; Sir Ian Fraser, *Hansard* (19.03.1947), vol. 435, cc. 416-526; Mr. Chetwynd, *Hansard* (21.03.1947), vol. 435, cc. 816-26; Mr. Robens and Mr. David Jones, *Hansard* (21.03.1947), vol. 435, cc. 816-26.

<sup>28</sup> Mr. D.J. Williams, *Hansard* (24.03.1949), vol. 463, cc. 568-705. Similar sentiments were expressed by others including Mr. Leslie Hale, *Hansard* (15.03.1948), vol. 448, cc. 1841-50.

<sup>29</sup> Mr. N. Edwards, *Hansard* (05.12.1950), vol. 482, c. 314.

<sup>30</sup> Isaacs noted the pressure, TNA LAB 20/453, ‘Note from G. Isaacs to S. Cripps’ (10.02.1949). Remploy also, TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Fortieth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (26.01.1949).

<sup>31</sup> Examination of the records of *Hansard* revealed that in the period up to June 1949 there were fifty-six instances of queries about Remploy by Labour MPs, three from Conservative MPs, and one from a Unionist MP.

Labour MPs in Parliament to query Remploy.<sup>32</sup> Remploy as a concept was also perhaps more in keeping with the ideological make-up of the Labour Party at this time, reflecting the wider commitment to full employment, nationalisation, central planning and welfare. While Hansard cannot reveal all the discussions which take place among politicians, and Isaacs himself claimed that Remploy was under pressure to expand ‘from all quarters of the House’, the discrepancy here is striking.<sup>33</sup>

There were therefore differing visions of how Remploy should function from its very beginning, with the Board wishing to operate as a commercial enterprise in order to provide the ‘genuine employment’ they believed was central to its remit, and the MOL, reflecting also the views of MPs, demanding instead rapid expansion based upon meeting the need. With the direction of Remploy ultimately determined by the MOL, it was this latter policy which was adopted and which led to the rapid expansion of Remploy. Whilst the planned figure of 140 factories was not to be reached, Remploy ended its first seven years with ninety-one factories spread out over the country, employing nearly 6,000 disabled people.<sup>34</sup> This was an enormous expansion, based not on Remploy’s commercial strength but entirely on the basis of it operating as a social service. The Board complained at an early stage that Isaacs was being far too optimistic in the promises he was making about the speed and extent of expansion, and commented frequently upon the severe difficulties this posed for the company in terms of costs, organisation and logistics.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, p. 90.

<sup>33</sup> TNA LAB 20/453, ‘Note from G. Isaacs to S. Cripps’ (10.02.1949). Remploy also noted this, TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Fortieth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (26.01.1949).

<sup>34</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, ‘A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years’ (March, 1953), p. 34.

<sup>35</sup> See for example, *Ibid.*; Remploy Limited, *We Have a Part to Play*, (28.09.1988). For Government acknowledgement see ‘Loss By Remploy Limited: Ministry’s Reply to Criticism’, *The Times* (30.08.1952).



In addition to these practical problems, was the perceived danger to the Board's vision of providing 'genuine employment'. The worry, expressed by the Executive Director of Remploy, Air Commodore Venn, who had been appointed following his retirement from the post of Director of Personal Services at the Air Ministry, was that workers 'would be inclined to think that as they were in Government factories it would not be necessary for employees to work hard, or for them to keep good time'.<sup>36</sup> Such concerns were increased after comments were made by Isaacs, including at the opening ceremony for the Bridgend factory, that 'it would not matter if the factories did not pay for themselves'.<sup>37</sup> It was later reported that the workers at Bridgend were 'using that statement as an excuse for slow work'.<sup>38</sup> At other factories too it was reported that work was slow with employees 'of the opinion that once they were in the job they had no need to worry'.<sup>39</sup> In response, the Board asked for Isaacs to 'issue a statement which will call for a greater effort by the severely disabled employed in Remploy Factories'.<sup>40</sup> The Board thus remained at odds with the MOL, with the overarching complaint that the infrastructure of the company was hastily established based on social need, rather than on any sound commercial strategy, which was not in keeping with their understanding of its function.

These growing tensions over Remploy's fundamental purpose came to a head in 1949, sparked by the financial results for the previous year which showed an overall loss of

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<sup>36</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (29.10.1946); TNA LAB 20/120, MOL, 'Note on The Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited' (1945).

<sup>37</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (28.01.1947).

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.; TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (28.10.1947); 'Minutes of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (25.02.1947).

approximately £387,000.<sup>41</sup> This led the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Cripps to raise concerns at the amounts involved and in a letter to the MOL, these ‘misgivings’ on the ‘large amount provided for deficits’ were expressed.<sup>42</sup> Described by Morgan as ‘the high Anglican prophet of austerity’, Cripps had been appointed Chancellor following the fuel and convertibility crises of 1947, which had served to limit the bold ‘socialist advance’ pursued by his predecessor, and pursued an agenda of restraint in public expenditure.<sup>43</sup> Though he stopped short of demanding a reduction in funding for Remploy, given the company’s remit, Cripps asked that the Board be warned that in future ‘a report will be required containing justification for charges at the present rate if they are to continue’.<sup>44</sup> In his reply, Isaacs came to the defence of the Board, and highlighted the efforts being made to make the factories ‘as nearly self-supporting as can be’.<sup>45</sup> The efforts he described were based on increasing sales, with no suggestion of halting the expansion.<sup>46</sup> Thus the concern expressed by the Treasury did not initially persuade Isaacs to change course.

The concerns of the Chancellor were, however, shared by the Board, and at a meeting in February 1949, the newly appointed Chairman, Sir Robert Burrows, whose

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<sup>41</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Forty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (23.02.1949); TNA LAB 20/453, ‘Statement of Income and Expenditure for the nine months ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 1948’.

<sup>42</sup> TNA LAB 20/453, ‘Note from E. Hale to T.W.F. Dalton’ (31.01.1949). Hill, *The Welfare State in Britain*, p. 42.

<sup>43</sup> Morgan, *Britain Since 1945*, pp. 29, 67, 70; Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, p. 267; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 231; P. Clarke & R. Toye, ‘Cripps, Sir (Richard) Stafford (1889–1952), politician and lawyer’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (06.01.2011), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-32630> (accessed 26/07/2019).

<sup>44</sup> TNA LAB 20/453, ‘Note from E. Hale to T.W.F. Dalton’ (31.01.1949).

<sup>45</sup> TNA LAB 20/453, ‘Note from G. Isaacs to S. Cripps’ (10.02.1949).

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

background was in industry, expressed his dismay at such ‘heavy expenditure’.<sup>47</sup> The problem, as far as he could see, was that the pressure to open new factories meant that Remploy could not consolidate its position and could not hope to improve production or reduce losses.<sup>48</sup> The Board agreed with this assessment and it was decided that the Chairman would write to Isaacs to ascertain ‘whether he considers we should postpone the opening of further factories or whether, in his opinion, the work of the Corporation in employing severely disabled persons justified these very heavy losses’.<sup>49</sup> The aim was to obtain a ‘definite statement of policy’ as to what function the company was to serve – was its role as a business or a social service to be given priority?<sup>50</sup> Isaacs’ first reaction was not to endorse the desired pause in the expansion but to instead strengthen the company to deal with it better.<sup>51</sup> As with the concern expressed by the Treasury, Isaacs was not prepared to shift the focus of Remploy to prioritise commercial efficiency in line with the Board’s wishes.

This would change however, the following month, as Sir Robert engaged in a meeting with Sir Edward Bridges at the Treasury.<sup>52</sup> An experienced and prominent civil servant, Sir Edward had served as Permanent Secretary to the Treasury and Head of

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<sup>47</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Forty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (23.02.1949). See records of appointment of Sir Robert in TNA LAB 20/120.

<sup>48</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Forty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (23.02.1949).

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> TNA LAB 20/453, ‘Note to Secretary’ (25.02.1949).

<sup>52</sup> TNA LAB 20/453, ‘Note from G. Ince’ (24.03.1949); TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Forty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (30.03.1949). Pemberton describes Sir Godfrey Ince as the chief official upon whom Isaacs relied at the Ministry of Labour, H. Pemberton, ‘Isaacs, George Alfred (1883–1979), trade unionist and politician’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (23.09.2004), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-31275> (accessed 22/04/2016).

the Civil Service since 1946.<sup>53</sup> During this meeting, Sir Robert made the Board's feelings on the direction of Remploy clear, and in terms of his own views, explained that 'he did not wish to be associated with an organisation which was losing a very large amount of money'.<sup>54</sup> Stressing the view of the Board that they should consolidate Remploy's position, Sir Robert said he 'was anxious that they should not be pressed to go too fast'.<sup>55</sup> Sir Edward, confirming that the Treasury was greatly concerned at the rate of expansion 'as this meant additional losses', stated that the Chancellor would press Isaacs on the matter further.<sup>56</sup> As promised, Cripps wrote to Isaacs later in the month, forcefully expressing these concerns that Remploy was expanding 'faster than would be justified on consideration of economic production'.<sup>57</sup> In addition, he echoed the view presented to him by Sir Robert of the importance of providing 'genuine employment', noting that the 'main benefit of employment to a disabled man is that it gives him a sense of usefulness and of pulling his own weight'.<sup>58</sup> Arguing against the building of factories based on an area's need alone, he stressed that 'some regard must be paid to commercial prospects, and to the inevitable limits on the capacity of the Corporation's organisation'.<sup>59</sup> Supported by the Board, the Treasury had expressly challenged the policy towards Remploy directed by the MOL. It has been suggested by historians such as Laybourn, that the battles over expenditure within the Labour government, which would famously culminate in the resignation of the Minister of Health, Aneurin Bevan, over the introduction of prescription charges in the NHS, first emerged in the autumn of 1949 following the

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<sup>53</sup> R. Chapman, 'Bridges, Edward Ettingdene, first Baron Bridges (1892–1969), civil servant', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (12.01.2018), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-32063> (accessed 26/07/2019).

<sup>54</sup> TNA LAB 20/453, 'Note from G. Ince' (24.03.1949).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> TNA LAB 20/453, 'Note from S. Cripps to G. Isaacs' (29.03.1949).

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

decision to devalue the pound.<sup>60</sup> It is apparent, however, that a rift between the Treasury and the MOL occurred some months before this over the direction of Remploy.

Following this direct intervention by the Chancellor, and thus facing opposition from both the Board and Treasury, Isaacs relented and it was decided that the position of Remploy would be jointly examined by the company, the MOL and the Treasury, and an agreed future programme established.<sup>61</sup> With the Board and Treasury allied in their desires, a 'slow down' was agreed, with a delay to the completion of factories already in progress wherever possible and a limit to the opening of new factories from 1951 to 'about 12 a year'.<sup>62</sup> Isaacs announced the policy change in the House of Commons on 7 July 1949. Stressing the arguments which had been made by the Board and subsequently adopted by the Treasury that it would be a 'false kindness to the severely disabled to jeopardise the success of the Corporation by over-hasty expansion at the present stage', Isaacs informed the House that there would be seventy-nine factories in operation by the end of the year and 'some slowing down thereafter'.<sup>63</sup> A final programme for factory building was later completed which anticipated seventy-four factories to be in operation by the end of the year, at least twenty more during 1950 and a further forty-six by 1954.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 231; Morgan, *Britain Since 1945*, pp. 73-4, 100-103.

<sup>61</sup> TNA LAB 20/453, 'Note from A.F.A. Sutherland to Col. Robertson' (04.04.1949).

<sup>62</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Forty-Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (29.06.1949); TNA LAB 20/453, 'Slowing Down of Remploy Factory Programme'.

<sup>63</sup> Mr. G. Isaacs, *Hansard*, 466 cc176-8 (07.07.1949). This was followed by a meeting with MPs to discuss the new programme, TNA LAB 20/453, 'Remploy Factories Memo; Note D.P.802/1949' (27.06.1949).

<sup>64</sup> TNA LAB 20/453, Remploy Limited, 'Copy of Statement circulated by Headquarters, Ministry of Labour and National Service to Regional Controllers' (03.10.1949); Remploy Limited, 'Executive Director's Report No. 44' (21.09.1949).

Having achieved their aim, the Board focused fully upon consolidating Remply as a business as its expansion was slowed. The Board noted that while keeping in mind the ‘great importance of the well-being of the disabled employees’, the reduction of the loss made by the Company was now to become the ‘constant endeavour’ in order to ‘keep down the charge on the country’s revenue’.<sup>65</sup> This resulted in new initiatives including efforts to increase the monitoring of factories, the establishment of standard product lines, the creation of a dedicated sales division, and the introduction of mechanisation to replace manual production.<sup>66</sup> Such measures had a limited effect on the company’s commercial efficiency. The Board did credit the slow-down with having a positive effect with a general upward trend in production and sales.<sup>67</sup> However, problems persisted with the supply and cost of raw materials, unsatisfactory sales figures, the quality of goods produced, the ability to keep to delivery dates, a continued lack of work, and in the securing of government contracts.<sup>68</sup> By the summer of 1951, with the company requiring an additional £300,000 subvention from the Treasury, the position was described as ‘still far from satisfactory’.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remply Limited, ‘Minutes of the Sixtieth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (20.12.1950); ‘Minutes of the Fifty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (25.10.1950).

<sup>66</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (29.07.1947); ‘Minutes of the Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (27.10.1948); Remply Limited, ‘Minutes of the Fifty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (29.03.1950); ‘Minutes of the Fifty-Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (28.06.1950); ‘Minutes of the Fifty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (26.06.1950); TNA BM 8/2, Remply Limited, ‘Minutes of the Sixty-Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (30.05.1951); ‘Minutes of the Sixty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (25.07.1951); ‘Minutes of the Fifty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (27.09.1950); ‘Minutes of the Fifty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (25.10.1950); ‘Minutes of the Fifty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (22.11.1950); ‘Minutes of the Sixty-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (28.03.1951).

<sup>67</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remply Limited, ‘Minutes of the Sixtieth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (20.12.1950).

<sup>68</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remply Limited, ‘Minutes of the Fifty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (29.03.1950); ‘Minutes of the Fifty-Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (28.06.1950); TNA BM 8/2, Remply Limited, ‘Minutes of the Fifty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (25.10.1950). Mr. Isaacs, *Hansard* (28.03.1950), vol. 473, cc. 174.

<sup>69</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remply Limited, ‘Minutes of the Sixty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (27.06.1951); ‘Minutes of the Sixty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (26.09.1951).

Nor had the new policy direction laid the issue of Remploy's primary purpose to rest in all cases. Interest in Remploy from MPs remained high for the remainder of the Attlee governments' periods in office, and there were continued requests for factories for individual constituencies and a general extension of the Remploy programme, despite continued responses from the Minister of Labour of the decision to slow further expansion.<sup>70</sup> As before, such comments and requests came overwhelmingly from Labour MPs.<sup>71</sup> There was also the beginning of concern expressed that the focus on commercial efficiency in Remploy was not compatible with its perceived role as a social service.<sup>72</sup> Isaacs himself, following his replacement as Minister of Labour by Bevan, spoke of Remploy as 'a matter very dear to me', and continued to emphasise his view of the social value of the company's work, which 'could not altogether be measured in terms of money'.<sup>73</sup>

In a sign of things to come, however, the emphasis on Remploy's commercial efficiency was to quickly become greater than the Board had intended. In January 1950, soon after the agreed pause in expansion championed by the Board, its submitted expenditure estimates for the year were returned from the MOL with a demand for capital expenditure cuts which would drastically alter even the reduced

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<sup>70</sup> Mr. Mainwaring, *Hansard* (24.11.1949), vol. 470, cc. 578-644; Mr. Isaacs, *Hansard* (14.03.1950), vol. 472, cc. 888-90; Mr. A. Edward Davies, *Hansard* (13.07.1950), vol. 477, cc. 1709-18; Mr. H. Hynd, *Hansard* (13.03.1951), vol. 486, cc. 1336-423; Mr. Ness Edwards, *Hansard* (05.12.1950), vol. 482, cc. 212-318; Mr. Isaacs, *Hansard* (14.03.1950), vol. 472, cc. 888-90; Mr. MacPherson, *Hansard* (28.03.1950), vol. 473, cc. 21 ; M. Hall, *Hansard* (30.03.1950), vol. 473, cc. 537; Mr. Willey, *Hansard* (30.03.1950), vol. 473, cc. 80; Mr. D. Williams, *Hansard* (04.04.1950), vol. 473, cc. 135; Mr. L. Hale, *Hansard* (18.04.1950), vol. 474, cc. 15-6; Mr. G. Thomans, *Hansard* (16.05.1950), vol. 475, cc. 138-9; Mr. P. Freeman and Mr. Isaacs, *Hansard* (18.05.1950), vol. 475, cc. 1363-4; Dr. Stross, *Hansard* (27.05.1950), vol. 476, cc. 2069; Mr. G. Thomas and Mr. Isaacs, *Hansard* (24.10.1950), vol. 478, cc. 330; Mr. M. MacPherson, *Hansard* (09.11.1950), vol. 480, cc. 88; Sir Ian Fraser and Mr. A. Bevan, *Hansard* (25.01.1951), vol. 483, cc. 297; Dr. King, Mr. R. Morley and Mr. A. Bevan, *Hansard* (01.02.1951), vol. 483, cc. 1063-4; Mr. H. Hynd, *Hansard* (08.03.1951), vol. 485, cc. 84-5.

<sup>71</sup> Examination of *Hansard* reveals that from July 1949 there were then twenty-three queries about Remploy from Labour MPs and three from Conservative MPs.

<sup>72</sup> Mr. John McKay and Mr. Lee, *Hansard* (24.07.1951), vol. 491, cc. 180-1.

<sup>73</sup> Mr. Isaacs, *Hansard* (23.01.1951), vol. 483, cc. 77-108. TNA BM 8/2.Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Sixtieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (20.12.1950).

building programme.<sup>74</sup> In negotiations with the MOL, Remploy's previous stance was reversed as it had to push for agreement to proceed with planned factories at Springburn and Maesteg and extensions to the factories at Motherwell and Stirling.<sup>75</sup> The MOL reply, which followed the re-election of the Labour government on a manifesto of consolidation of welfare and continued restraint in public spending, made it clear that any further expansion was dependent on an increase in sales figures from the company to justify it.<sup>76</sup> With the outbreak of the Korean War later in the year leading to increased costs for rearmament and ongoing battles within the Cabinet over the priorities of welfare expenditure, the final Attlee government has been characterised as being jaded and lacking in new ideas.<sup>77</sup> Against this backdrop, the approach of any further expansion of Remploy being predicated on commercial justification was not to be reconsidered.

By the end of the period of Labour government, therefore, the commercial efficiency of the company was established as of central importance. Contrary to the notion that a business imperative only appeared in the 1980s to override a previous focus on the humanitarian aspect of Remploy, it has been shown here that this was present from the very beginning and was initially endorsed, even championed, by the company's Board itself. Contesting this view, the drive of the MOL to place Remploy as a primarily social service, established based upon need alone, was defeated by the combined efforts of the company and a Treasury pursuing a policy of austerity in the

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<sup>74</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Fiftieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (04.01.1950).

<sup>75</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Fifty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors' (22.02.1950).

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. In the end Remploy was allowed to proceed with the new factories but not the proposed extensions, TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Fifty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors' (29.03.1950). Morgan, *Britain Since 1945*, p. 84.

<sup>77</sup> Coxall and Robin, *British Politics Since the War*, p. 21; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 234.



face of economic difficulties. Though a number of MPs still disputed this view, the Remploy Board achieved their aim of establishing the company's purpose as one of providing 'genuine employment', through operating as much as possible as a commercially viable business and thereby reducing the cost to the Exchequer. By the end of the Attlee governments, this view was fully adopted by the MOL. This saw the beginning of the link between the scope of the company and its economic performance, and the beginning of curtailment stemming not from the Remploy Board's own wishes, but from government's views of the company's commercial strength and their own welfare expenditure priorities.

#### Developments in Policy, 1951-1964

Though the Conservative Party had attacked the costs of welfare during its time in opposition, following its election to government in 1951, political expediency and the influence of the 'One Nation Tories', who saw the welfare state 'as a necessary part of economic and social cohesion', ensured that there was no widespread dismantling of the post-war settlement established under Labour.<sup>78</sup> There was, however a firm grip on all public spending and the imposition of expenditure cuts on public services during times of economic difficulty.<sup>79</sup> For Remploy, this meant that the approach taken by the Labour government prior to the election was to become firmly entrenched, and the economic pinch upon the company, in common with welfare expenditure generally, was to become a tight squeeze under the successive

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<sup>78</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 51; Coxall and Robin, *British Politics Since the War*, p. 22; Morgan, *Britain since 1945*, pp. 112-3; Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, p. 289; Page, *Revisiting the Welfare State*, pp. 52-7.

<sup>79</sup> Page, *Revisiting the Welfare State*, pp. 52-7; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 51; Coxall and Robin, *British Politics Since the War*, p. 22; Morgan, *Britain since 1945*, pp. 112-3; Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, p. 289.

Conservative governments which followed until 1964.<sup>80</sup> This agenda was set almost immediately with the company's expenditure estimates for 1952-53 reduced under directives from both the MOL and the Treasury.<sup>81</sup> The minutes of the meetings of the Remploy Board throughout this period of Conservative government reveal a near continuous pressure to reduce expenditure.<sup>82</sup> Primarily this pressure was the result of edicts passed down to the MOL from the Treasury, who noted that the former had been continuously 'exercised' to keep funding to Remploy 'to a minimum'.<sup>83</sup> There was some sympathy with the financial pressure placed upon Remploy expressed within the MOL, with one official expressing his view that the company's 'straitjacket is far too straight and I shouldn't like to be the one who asks Remploy to wear it!'.<sup>84</sup> On the whole, however, the view of the MOL was aligned with the need to maximise commercial efficiency, with the opinion that it was up to the company to do more to reduce its continuous financial losses.<sup>85</sup>

This position was endorsed by the report from the Select Committee on Estimates in 1952, which judged Remploy purely in terms of its commercial efficiency and was

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<sup>80</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 51.

<sup>81</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Sixty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (31.10.1951); 'Minutes of the Seventy-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors' (30.01.1952).

<sup>82</sup> See TNA BM 8/1, BM 8/2, BM 8/3 for these minutes.

<sup>83</sup> TNA LAB 20/929, 'Remploy Memorandum by Treasury' (1955); 'Note to Sir Brunel Cohen' (03.11.1955); 'Note from Mr. P.H. St. John Wilson to Dame Mary Smieton' (15.03.1956); 'Note from Mr. P.H. St. John Wilson to Mr J. R. Wade, D.P.2747/1955' (13.04.1956); 'Note from Mr. St. John Wilson to Mr. J Wade, D.P. 2747/1955' (17.03.1956); TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Fourteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (16.11.1955).

<sup>84</sup> TNA LAB 20/929, 'Note from Mr. P.H. St. John Wilson' (31.10.1956); 'Note from Mr. Slater to Mr. St. John Wilson' (19.08.1955); 'Notes for Minister (to be read in conjunction with the letter of 3<sup>rd</sup> November to Sir Brunel Cohen)' (03.11.1955); 'Note from Mr. P.H. St. John Wilson to Dame Mary Smieton' (08.12.1955).

<sup>85</sup> TNA LAB 20/929, 'Note from Mr. P.H. St. John Wilson' (31.11.1956); 'Note from Mr. Slater to Mr. St. John Wilson' (19.08.1955); 'Notes for Minister (to be read in conjunction with the letter of 3<sup>rd</sup> November to Sir Brunel Cohen)' (03.11.1955); 'Note from Mr. P.H. St. John Wilson to Dame Mary Smieton' (08.12.1955).

highly critical of its management and organisation.<sup>86</sup> Drawing attention to the company's financial losses, the report recommended an urgent re-examination of policy and of the organisation of the company in order to make it more commercially efficient.<sup>87</sup> The message of the report was clear; Remploy was a failing business which was costing the Exchequer a large, and increasing, amount of money.<sup>88</sup> The publication of the report caught the attention of the press with numerous headlines focused upon the amount of money 'lost' by the company.<sup>89</sup> The report in 1956 of the Committee of Inquiry on The Rehabilitation, Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons (Piercy Committee), established to provide a full review of the progress of the provisions of the DPEA, was more measured, stressing the important welfare role Remploy played beyond its financial results, yet also emphasised the importance of productivity and the concept of 'genuine employment' in distinguishing sheltered employment provision from purely occupational welfare.<sup>90</sup>

As a result of the establishment of the new policy regarding Remploy, the temporary 'slow down' in expansion agreed upon under the previous Labour government became an indefinite halt under the Conservatives. The new Minister of Labour, Sir Walter Monckton, a former solicitor-general and only recently elected MP appointed

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<sup>86</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), paras. 22-30, pp. xii-xv, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017). The Chairman of Remploy had noted to the Board at the time that questions from the Committee focused on issues of costs and commercial aspects, TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Seventy-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors' (27.02.1952).

<sup>87</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), para. 22, pp. xi-xii; para. 30, p. xv, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017).

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 30, p. xv; paras. 292-3, p. 22.

<sup>89</sup> TNA LAB 20/ 653, 'State Company for Disabled Loses Heavily', *The Nottingham Journal* (30.04.1952); '£2M. Loss On Factories For Disabled', *Daily Telegraph* (30.04.1952); 'Yearly Loss Of £380 On Each Disabled Workers', *Manchester Guardian* (30.04.1952); 'State Firm For Disabled Censured', *Daily Mail* (30.04.1952); 'Firm Training Disabled "Overspends"', *News Chronicle* (30.04.1952).

<sup>90</sup> *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on The Rehabilitation Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 9883 (1956), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 21/07/2017). Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 55-7; Reiss, *Blind Workers Against Charity*, pp. 138-40.

with the task of preventing industrial unrest, announced in the Commons in 1953 that despite the widely held view that more factories were needed, any further expansion would have to be justified by Remploy's commercial performance, and would be subject to the favourable economic conditions of the country in general to fund the increase in cost.<sup>91</sup> By 1960 the MOL would decide that there was still no justification for the opening of any new factories on these grounds.<sup>92</sup> As well as ending the expansion in the number of factory sites, the tight control on expenditure was reflected in terms of employee numbers. With each employee in Remploy effectively working at a loss, this became a key area to reduce expenditure. By October 1954, Remploy was employing 6,676 workers.<sup>93</sup> In order to secure a desired reduction in expenditure for the following year of £300,000, the MOL demanded that Remploy reduce its employee numbers to 6,000 'as soon as possible'.<sup>94</sup> This was not to be achieved through dismissals, but by allowing the natural 'run down' through not replacing workers who left Remploy for reasons such as securing work in open employment, sickness, or death.<sup>95</sup> This sudden reduction in numbers was considered by the Board to have been extremely damaging to the company, both in terms of

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<sup>91</sup> TNA LAB 20/929, 'Letter from Sir Walter Monckton to Sir Robert Burrows' (16.01.1954); TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 21; M. Pugh, 'Monckton, Walter Turner, first Viscount Monckton of Brenchley (1891–1965), lawyer and politician', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (06.01.2011), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-35061> (accessed 20/01/2017).

<sup>92</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixty-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors' (16.03.1930).

<sup>93</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Second Meeting of the Board of Directors' (27.10.1954); TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 21.

<sup>94</sup> TNA LAB 20/929, 'Letter from J.R. Wade to John Wilson' (25.05.1955); 'Remploy Memorandum by Treasury' (1955); TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (04.05.1955); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (23.02.1955); TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 21.

<sup>95</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (04.05.1955); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (23.02.1955).

production and morale and was a policy imposed upon them by the Conservative Government, entirely for economic reasons and without their support.<sup>96</sup>

In November 1955, against a backdrop of a severe balance of payments crisis and a mandate to cut public expenditure, the Treasury set out its own views on establishing the scope of Remploy's activities with a focus on reducing its cost to the Exchequer, the establishment of a fixed total amount available to Remploy over a given period, and the target for the company to reduce the loss per head to the average wage of its disabled employees.<sup>97</sup> Under the first of these '5 year plans', Remploy would receive an annual revenue grant of £2,500,000 and an average annual capital spending limit of £200,000.<sup>98</sup> Expansion was now possible, though the financial formula would remain the same, thus explicitly linking the scope of Remploy to its commercial performance.<sup>99</sup> Remploy did not manage to keep in line with this funding plan, requiring several additional grants in the following years, though these were always fiercely opposed by the Treasury and subject to reductions.<sup>100</sup> The target or measure of keeping the company losses in line with wages paid to its disabled workers also continued. Both Barnes and Millward noted the existence of this particular target in the 1980s, implying that this was a new development under the Thatcher government as part of a change in policy regarding Remploy geared towards economic

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<sup>96</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (04.05.1955); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (23.02.1955); TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 21.

<sup>97</sup> TNA LAB 20/929, 'Remploy Memorandum by Treasury' (1955). Coxall and Robins, *British Politics Since the War*, p. 22; Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, pp. 78-9.

<sup>98</sup> TNA LAB 20/929, 'Note from Sir W. Monckton to Sir Brunel Cohen, D.P.2747/1955' (16.12.1955).

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Thirty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (18.09.1957); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Thirty-Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (02.10.1957); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Forty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors' (19.03.1958); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Forty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (17.12.1958).

rationalisation.<sup>101</sup> However, this target and policy was in place from this point in 1955, and remained the key measure of Remploi's efficiency throughout the period considered in this thesis.

The improvement of Remploi's commercial efficiency also became more explicitly the goal outlined by the government in Parliament.<sup>102</sup> Again, this was related to the agreements of the previous Labour governments, with the Conservative government having adopted the view which had been initially expressed by the Board, that Remploi should provide 'genuine employment' in order to be worthwhile.<sup>103</sup> The Conservative governments at this time have been characterised as remaining committed to the welfare state, largely out of political necessity rather than sincere belief in its aims, but only in terms of maintenance and management.<sup>104</sup> This appears to be reflected in the case of Remploi, as though they remained committed to supporting the scheme, there was always very strict expenditure management, and a constant pressure to reduce the cost to the Exchequer.

The Remploi Board itself, while unable to reverse the overall policy, did show attempts to negotiate within this framework. The Board had wanted the initial temporary halt on expansion in 1949 to allow them to consolidate the business, but were not in agreement with the indefinite 'standstill order' of the subsequent Conservative government, expressing a desire to open as many as twenty further

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<sup>101</sup> Barnes, *Disabled People and Discrimination*, p. 73; Millward, 'Invalid definitions, invalid responses', pp. 184-5.

<sup>102</sup> See for example the debate on 'Remploi Factories', *Hansard* (19.07.1955), vol. 544, cc. 270-331.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid*; Sir Peter Bennett, *Hansard* (06.05.1952), vol. 500, cc. 342-52.

<sup>104</sup> Hill, *The Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 46-7; Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, p. 289.

factories in 1952.<sup>105</sup> The Chairman at this time, Sir Robert Burrows, noted that under the government economy drive, Remploy had been ‘clamped down’ against its wishes.<sup>106</sup> There was a clear demarcation here between the view of the Board, which had wanted a ‘slow down’, and the Conservative government which had demanded a total halt. Remploy also became increasingly focused on improving its commercial efficiency, with the appointment of a new Managing Director, Mr Sam Green, in 1952 to facilitate this.<sup>107</sup> Green’s background was as an industrial advisor and trouble-shooter for a venture capital company which would see him installed as Chief Executive to rescue failing companies.<sup>108</sup> It appears that his appointment to Remploy generated some publicity, and indeed some apprehension, with one national newspaper describing him as ‘a Company doctor wielding a surgeon’s knife’.<sup>109</sup> Following his appointment, Remploy underwent a significant reorganisation on commercial lines, which included transitioning from a geographical to trade based organisation, the imposition of new sales targets, and a public relations push.<sup>110</sup> The loss of some non-disabled staff was also involved, as was the closure of the factory at Maesteg which had been deemed uneconomical.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Sir Peter Bennett, *Hansard* (06.05.1952), vol. 500, cc. 342-52; *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), paras. 282-7, p. 21, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017).

<sup>106</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), paras. 282-7, p. 21, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017); TNA LAB 20/929, ‘Remploy Memorandum by Treasury’ (1955).

<sup>107</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Seventy-eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (30.07.1952). The appointment was decided at the end of January 1952, TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Seventy-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (30.01.1952); ‘Minutes of the Seventy-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (27.02.1952).

<sup>108</sup> A. Levy, ‘Obituary: Sam Green’, *The Independent* (08.02.1996), <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituariesam-green-1317902.html> (accessed 14/07/2019).

<sup>109</sup> TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, ‘A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited’ (May, 1979), p. 19.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20; TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Seventy-ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (24.09.1952).

<sup>111</sup> ‘Remploy Factories’, *Hansard* (03.02.1953), vol. 510, cc. 1633-5.

The Board therefore focused, in line with the demands of both the MOL and Treasury, on maximising Remploy's commercial efficiency, though this was always to prove a question of attempting to limit financial losses rather than generate any profit. At the same time however, the constant aim expressed by the Board in doing so, was that this was necessary in order to justify the further expansion of the company and to provide for increasing numbers of disabled people.<sup>112</sup> Whilst this involved a constant focus on maximising productivity, the Board did express a willingness to compromise this in favour of the workforce on a number of occasions, including encouraging social and welfare clubs within factories, establishing a welfare fund to aid sick or injured workers, rejecting the suggestion that some factories be placed on 'short-time' to save money, or that large numbers of workers be 'laid off' due to shortages of work.<sup>113</sup> There were also occasional calls to reduce somewhat the focus on the commercial aspects of the company. At the annual general meeting in November 1958, the Chairman commented that it was disappointing that 'people were apt to view Remploy from a purely financial standpoint and failed to appreciate that the function of the Company was to employ productively as many severely disabled persons as possible'.<sup>114</sup> The perception among the Board members appears to have been that Remploy should provide sheltered employment for as many disabled people as possible, but should maximise productivity in order to reduce losses and make this goal viable. Attempting to balance these objectives often resulted in tensions between

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<sup>112</sup> TNA LAB 20/929, 'Letter from Sir Walter Monckton to Sir Robert Burrows' (16.01.1954); 'Sir Brunel Cohen's Notes, D.P.2747/55' (09.11.1955); 'Note from Mr J. R. Wade to Mr. P.H. St. John Wilson, D.P.2747/1955' (03.04.1956). See minutes of Board meetings throughout the period covered in the thesis in TNA BM 8/2, BM 8/3, BM 8/49, BM 8/79 and BM 8/80.

<sup>113</sup> TNA LAB 20/929, 'Note from Mr J. R. Wade to Mr. P.H. St. John Wilson' (29.05.1956); 'Notes P.O.3258/1953' (7-11.06.1956); 'Note from Mr. P.H. St. John Wilson to Mr J. R. Wade' (14.06.1956); TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Twenty-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors' (19.09.1956); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Thirty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (18.09.1957); TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 29.

<sup>114</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Thirteenth Annual General Meeting' (19.11.1958).



the Conservative governments and the Board. In 1954, for example, Remploi had increased its employee numbers when it was suddenly required to save £300,000, with the Board expressing its frustration at the MOL for this sudden change.<sup>115</sup> The rapid ‘run down’ of employees demanded the following year similar drew the ire of the Board, as did a demand for a reduction in estimates in 1961.<sup>116</sup>

In terms of activity among MPs in the Commons, the announcement of the halt to the Remploi programme appears to have done little to quell continued demands for further expansion and interest in Remploi remained high. Hampton has suggested that during the 1950s the government felt little pressure to increase ‘statutory provision’ for disabled people.<sup>117</sup> In the case of Remploi however, this is clearly not true. The period of Conservative government from 1951-1964 saw repeated calls from MPs for further factories and regular criticism of policy towards Remploi. A typical example was the statement from the Labour MP for Rhondda West, Iorwerth Thomas, who called for further factories for the severely disabled, claiming ‘there can be no justification at all, whatever Government is in power, for holding back on this serious problem’.<sup>118</sup> There were also concerns raised about the focus on improving production efficiency, with the prominent back-bench Labour MP, John Paton,

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<sup>115</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploi Limited, ‘Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (08.10.1954); ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Second Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (27.10.1954). See further discussion in Board meeting minutes in TNA BM 8/2. TNA BM 10/2, Remploi Limited, ‘A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploi Limited’ (May, 1979), p. 21.

<sup>116</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploi Limited, ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (26.02.1955); ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (25.05.1965); ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Seventy-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (15.02.1961); TNA BM 8/3, ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Eighty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (15.11.1961); ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Eighty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (20.12.1961); ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Eighty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (21.02.1962); TNA BM 10/2, Remploi Limited, ‘A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploi Limited’ (May, 1979), p. 21. Mr P. Thomas, *Hansard* (29.06.1960), vol. 625, cc. 1386-7.

<sup>117</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 65.

<sup>118</sup> Mr. Iorwerth Thomas, *Hansard* (04.02.1952), vol. 495, cc. 650-759; Mr. G. Thomas, *Hansard* (17.06.1952), vol. 502, cc. 991-2.

condemning in 1952 the growing trend of considering Remploy from a purely commercial perspective, contrary to what he considered the 'proper standpoint' of its role as a social service.<sup>119</sup>

Sir Walter Monckton suggested in 1953 that it was a widely held view amongst 'members of all political parties', that the work of Remploy 'should not be confined to the 90 factories at present in existence', and the 'need for additional factories in various parts of the country' was acknowledged.<sup>120</sup> This is not what is apparent from examination of the records of Hansard, which reveal that, as was the case under the Attlee governments, interest in Remploy came almost entirely from the Labour Party, with well over a hundred instances of Labour MPs commenting on Remploy, asking for further provision or a reversal of policy, during the period of Conservative government up to 1964, compared to only a handful of Conservatives.<sup>121</sup> Hansard can of course only provide a limited view of political discourse among MPs and it is possible that Conservative MPs were asking for further provision through other channels. Once again however, the disparity remains striking and it is certainly clear that in terms of official discussion in the Commons it was Labour MPs who were raising the issue.

The Labour Party during this period of Conservative government has been characterised as being paralysed by its own internal divisions.<sup>122</sup> Nevertheless, the

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<sup>119</sup> Mr. John Paton, *Hansard* (06.05.1952), vol. 500, cc. 342-52; D. Howell, 'Paton, John (1886-1976), politician', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (24.05.2008), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-65954> (accessed 14/05/2018).

<sup>120</sup> TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 21.

<sup>121</sup> See *Hansard* references to Remploy.

<sup>122</sup> Deakin, *The Politics of Welfare*, p. 42; Morgan, *Britain Since 1945*, p. 145.

topic of Remploy became a significant area of attack upon the government by the Labour Party during its time in opposition. Although there were a number of large debates upon Remploy in the 1950s, the most significant wave of such attacks occurred in 1955. This began with two major debates in February during which Labour MPs admonished the government for reducing support for Remploy and ignoring its social service aspect.<sup>123</sup> This continued in June, following a general election which had seen the Conservatives increase their majority, with Labour's future leader and later Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, condemning the government for the lack of any new intake of workers in Remploy, describing it as 'mean' and indicative of its 'policy in social affairs'.<sup>124</sup> The following month saw a further major debate with a proposed motion by Labour to call 'upon the Government to remove the present restrictions and to provide facilities for extending the activities of Remploy in such a way as to absorb large numbers of disabled persons'.<sup>125</sup> This was highlighted in the press as an important attack by the opposition.<sup>126</sup> The debate opened with a lengthy statement by the prominent Labour MP, Ian Mikardo. Associated with the 'Bevanite Left' of the Labour Party, Mikardo was a signatory of the 1947 *Keep Left* pamphlet, which criticised the Attlee government's timidity in office, and wrote *The Second Five Years* in 1948, which proposed a radical programme for a subsequent Labour administration.<sup>127</sup> During his address, Mikardo strongly criticised the Conservative government's attitude to Remploy, closing with the remark that 'they

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<sup>123</sup> See 'Remploy Scheme', *Hansard* (17.02.1955), vol. 537, cc. 546-50; 'Remploy Scheme', *Hansard* (24.02.1955), vol. 537, cc. 1419-24.

<sup>124</sup> Mr. Harold Wilson, *Hansard* (10.06.1955), vol. 542, cc. 144-240.

<sup>125</sup> Mr. Ian Mikardo, *Hansard* (19.07.1955), vol. 544 cc. 270-331.

<sup>126</sup> 'Lively Debates Promised on Coal and Remploy: Labour M.P.s look for Tory split', *The Manchester Guardian* (18.07.1955).

<sup>127</sup> T. Dalyell, 'Mikardo, Ian [known as Mik] (1908–1993), politician', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (25.05.2006), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-52289> (accessed 27/07/2019).

should be ashamed of themselves...the Government's behaviour in this matter is unworthy of the leaders of a decent and civilised community'.<sup>128</sup> After a heated and lengthy debate, the motion was defeated, with '220 Ayes and 268 Noes'.<sup>129</sup> Despite this defeat, comments from Labour MPs continued in a similar vein for the remainder of the Conservative period in government, and illustrate that there was significant support in the Labour Party at this time for a reversal of policy regarding the focus on commercial efficiency in Remploy which had become firmly adopted.<sup>130</sup>

### Developments in Policy, 1964-1979

The election of Labour, finally united under Wilson, in 1964 did see an initial relaxation in the severe financial pressure which had been on the company. This Labour government has been characterised as having had great aspirations in social policy which were ultimately undermined by economic difficulties once in power, though it remained a 'more generous spender on social policy' than the preceding Conservative governments.<sup>131</sup> Hampton has suggested that the political climate at this time was favourable towards increasing welfare provision for disabled people, with Labour open to reviewing social services following the rediscovery of poverty, and the growth of the 'poverty lobby' of campaigning groups which included prominent disability groups such as the DIG and the DA.<sup>132</sup> Though these advocacy groups focused on non-employment welfare provision, they nevertheless promoted awareness of the needs of disabled people generally.<sup>133</sup> For Remploy, new '3 year plans' were introduced which allowed for a steady increase in employees, and seem to have been

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<sup>128</sup> Mr. Ian Mikardo, *Hansard* (19.07.1955), vol. 544 cc. 270-331.

<sup>129</sup> 'Remploy Factories', *Hansard* (19.07.1955), vol. 544 cc. 270-331.

<sup>130</sup> See *Hansard* references to Remploy.

<sup>131</sup> Hill, *The Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 63-86.

<sup>132</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 88.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 88-96.

agreed to without much dispute.<sup>134</sup> In reading the Board meeting minutes from this period, there is a visible contrast with the constant discussions of pressure from the MOL to reduce expenditure under the preceding Conservative governments.<sup>135</sup> However, it is difficult to credit the reduction in pressure on Remploy entirely to the change of government or any such wider factors, as, unlike the situation under the Conservatives, the commercial position of Remploy at this time was relatively strong.<sup>136</sup> Indeed such was the strength of the company's position in September 1965 that the possibility was expressed that it could increase its employee numbers to 6,850 by the end of the year without needing any additional subvention from the Treasury.<sup>137</sup>

Any hope that the election of the Labour government would result in the kind of policy change called for whilst the Party was in opposition, with Remploy operated more as a social service and with an expansion to meet the growing level of need, was to ultimately prove to be misplaced. Responding to the economic situation retained its primacy in terms of determining the extent of Remploy's activities, with the MOL restricting expenditure and abandoning plans for further expansion late in 1965 due to the worsening economic conditions, which were to similarly affect other forms of

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<sup>134</sup> TNA BM 8/3, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Sixteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (20.01.1965); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Seventeenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (17.02.1965); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Nineteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (21.04.1965); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (20.10.1965); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Twenty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors' (19.01.1966).

<sup>135</sup> See TNA BM 8/2, BM 8/3.

<sup>136</sup> TNA BM 8/3, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Twenty-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors' (15.09.1965); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (20.10.1965); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Twenty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors' (19.01.1966); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (17.03.1966).

<sup>137</sup> TNA BM 8/3, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Twenty-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors' (15.09.1965); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (17.03.1966).

social expenditure.<sup>138</sup> Responses made by the Labour Government to questions in Parliament also reveal that fundamental policy had indeed not changed. When asked directly if the government would attempt to move away from Remploy being run as a business and return to a social service, the response was an emphatic ‘no’, and echoed the original view of the Remploy Board, subsequently adopted by Conservative governments, in saying that the ‘greatest service to the severely disabled men and women employed by Remploy is the provision of employment which approximates as nearly as possible to work in ordinary industry’.<sup>139</sup> Similarly, when asked to give a statement on policy towards Remploy, the Labour government’s response, while noting the wish to see further expansion, made clear this was based on the goal of increasing ‘production and sales’ to justify it.<sup>140</sup> This was again reiterated in 1968, with the desire expressed to increase provision under Remploy, ‘if the opportunity affords and there is a necessity for it’.<sup>141</sup> The ‘opportunity’ to do so was the economic circumstances by which the scope of Remploy was then determined, regardless of which of the two major parties was in power.

Following the return of a Labour Government in 1964, and with no u-turn in policy regarding the company, we see an end to any meaningful political debate over Remploy. Contrary to the general trend identified by Hampton of a greater incidence of discussions of welfare for disabled people in the Commons at this time, there was a clear reduction in the case of Remploy.<sup>142</sup> Hansard reveals a number of occasions of

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<sup>138</sup> TNA BM 8/3, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Two Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (20.10.1965); ‘Minutes of the Two Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (17.03.1966). Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 242; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 242.

<sup>139</sup> Mr. Heffer and Mr. Marsh, *Hansard* (23.11.1964), vol. 702, cc. 130w.

<sup>140</sup> Mr. Iorwerth Thomas and Mr. Gunter, *Hansard* (15.11.1965), vol. 720, cc. 18-19w.

<sup>141</sup> Mr. Walker, *Hansard* (21.10.1968), vol. 770, cc. 863-4.

<sup>142</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 102.

MPs asking for further provision, or to relax the productivity stresses, but these were few and far between.<sup>143</sup> From this point onwards the majority of questions relating to Rempoy, which still overwhelmingly came from Labour MPs, tended to focus on requests for information or on isolated issues such as wages or government contracts.<sup>144</sup> It seems therefore, that the fundamental policy questions about Rempoy had been answered, with the return of Labour to power the agenda was fixed, and neither party could claim, as one MP noted, a ‘monopoly of virtue’ while in government regarding the company.<sup>145</sup> The question of overall policy regarding Rempoy was thus settled with acceptance on all sides that the commercial strength of the company and economic factors were determining its level of activity.

This underlying policy was to remain throughout the period examined in this thesis. A common pattern is apparent with regards to Rempoy under subsequent governments, with the strength of the company and the circumstances of the wider economy dictating the scope and what expansion, if any, took place. Each subsequent government expressed the wish to expand when times were good, yet would ultimately curtail this when times were bad, resulting in something of a ‘stop-go’ policy, a term well known for its use to describe the economic management of the period generally.<sup>146</sup> Thus with the financial position of the company proving strong, the Labour government re-elected in 1966 could endorse expansion with an increase in employee numbers and with the possibility raised of further factories.<sup>147</sup> By 1969

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<sup>143</sup> Mr. Alec Jones and Mr. Roderick, *Hansard* (01.05.1972), vol. 836, cc. 11-2; Mr. Roderick, *Hansard* (30.01.1974), vol. 868, cc. 126-7w; Mr Donald Stewart, *Hansard* (17.06.1976), vol. 913, cc. 741-55.

<sup>144</sup> See *Hansard* references to Rempoy.

<sup>145</sup> Mr. Harold Walker, *Hansard* (21.10.1968), vol. 770 cc.863-4.

<sup>146</sup> Kavanagh and Morris, *Consensus Politics from Attlee to Major*, p. 38.

<sup>147</sup> For numerous discussions at Board level see records of meetings 1966-1968 in TNA BM 8/3 and BM 8/49. TNA BM 10/2, Rempoy Limited, ‘A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Rempoy Limited’ (May, 1979), p. 29. Mr Coleman and Mr Gunter, *Hansard* (17.05.1966), vol. 728,

however, with poor trading results, a lack of available work, and rising wages leading to an estimated shortfall of £1 million, this expansion was curtailed and the building of further factories abandoned.<sup>148</sup>

With Remploy recovering in 1971, the Conservative government elected the previous year under Edward Heath, similarly announced a policy of bold expansion.<sup>149</sup> This was against a backdrop of greater attention for the needs of disabled people generally as a result of the publicity given to the passing of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act in 1970, which comprised a number of measures for the welfare of disabled people, and the Thalidomide Scandal of 1972, in which *The Sunday Times* exposed the efforts of the distributor of the drug ‘Distival’, which had caused limb and organ malformations in more than 400 children, to avoid paying compensation, provoking public outrage.<sup>150</sup> Once again, however, this expansion was to be curtailed in the face of the economic and industrial relations crisis in 1973.<sup>151</sup> Labour had moved to the Left following its defeat in 1970, promising further nationalisation in its 1973 programme, and had developed an ambitious plan to deliver further sheltered employment as part of a ‘new comprehensive disabled employment service’.<sup>152</sup> At the same time the DE was undertaking a full review of sheltered employment provision, which will be considered in greater detail in Chapter Six, which raised the possibility of greatly expanding Remploy’s role. Once in government in 1974, Labour did indeed

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cc. 237w; Mr Probert and Mr Fernyhough, *Hansard* (28.05.1968), vol. 765, cc. 202-3w; Mr Probert and Mr Fernyhough, *Hansard* (23.07.1968), vol. 769, cc. 104w.

<sup>148</sup> For numerous discussions at Board level see records of meetings 1969-1970 in TNA BM 8/49.

<sup>149</sup> For numerous discussions at Board level see records of meetings 1970-1973 in TNA BM 8/49. Mr. Ashley and Mr. Heath, *Hansard* (25.02.1971), vol. 812, cc. 842-3; Mr. Ashley and Mr. Dudley-Smith, *Hansard* (01.07.1971), vol. 820, cc. 557-8.

<sup>150</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 154-68; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, p. 283.

<sup>151</sup> See Board meeting minutes for 1973-1974 in TNA BM 8/49.

<sup>152</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 145; Kavanagh & Morris, *Consensus Politics from Attlee to Major*, pp. 28-9.



announce plans for the expansion of Remploy with a progressive increase in employees and building programme to create new factories.<sup>153</sup> As before, and in common with Labour's other initial plans for social policy, this was to be curtailed in the face of increasing inflation and the severe financial crises of the mid-1970s, culminating in the imposition of 'cash limits' on Remploy in 1976 and tight control on expenditure remaining for the rest of the period, again in common with all aspects of public expenditure.<sup>154</sup>

As before, the Remploy Board attempted to work within the overall policy to maximise the number of disabled people it could employ and demonstrated some attempts to mitigate the focus on commercial performance alone.<sup>155</sup> The Managing Director appointed in 1974, Mr. Oliver Philpot, an experienced executive who had previously worked for both Unilever and Findus, was particularly notable in this regard, continuously pushing for further expansion of the company as a priority and resisting calls for cuts from the government.<sup>156</sup> Thus when faced with the limits on public expenditure in 1976 owing to the financial crisis, and with Remploy failing to keep its loss below the amount paid in wages, he continued to decry any demands for cuts as deplorable and stressed repeatedly his belief that too much emphasis was placed upon the 'commercial objective'. Though he was unsuccessful in preventing cuts to the company and the imposition of cash limits on its expenditure, he continued

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<sup>153</sup> See Board meeting minutes for 1974-1975 in TNA BM 8/49 and BM 8/79.

<sup>154</sup> For numerous discussions at Board level see records of meetings 1975-1979 in TNA BM 8/79 and BM 8/80. Hill, *The Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 106-11.

<sup>155</sup> TNA BM 8/3, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Thirty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (22.09.1966); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors' (22.12.1966); TNA BM 8/79, 'Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirty-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors' (13.09.1975); TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 29.

<sup>156</sup> See Board meeting records for 1974-1976 in TNA BM 8/49 and BM 8/79. 'Oliver Philpot', *The Telegraph* (06.05.1993), <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/military-obituaries/air-force-obituaries/5256284/Oliver-Philpot.html> (accessed 14/07/2018).

to state that in his view Rempoy was ‘primarily a Social Service’.<sup>157</sup> The period saw continued discussion amongst the Board of how the company should balance what they perceived as its dual role as social service and business, with one member highlighting in 1976 the constant embroilment of the company in considering the question of ‘human vs. economic’.<sup>158</sup> A firm vision within the Board on how to balance this function was never satisfactorily established, as the Hailey Report, published by Rempoy in 1980 to attempt to clarify the issue, made it clear that confusion over where the precise emphasis should lie, continued.<sup>159</sup>

While amounts of funding and levels of financial pressure may have varied, for successive governments in the period examined in this thesis, Rempoy’s commercial performance was always important, as were the economic circumstances of the country generally which dictated the amount each government was willing to spend to fund the company’s activities as part of their wider public expenditure priorities. Though it had remained a point of political debate into the 1960s, there was to be no return at any point to the initial view of the MOL in the 1940s of operating Rempoy purely as a social service, with its level of provision based upon need alone. Both Conservative and Labour governments expressed the wish to see the company expand, yet this was always linked to commercial and economic factors which ultimately curtailed such plans. The same justification for this approach was adopted by both parties in terms of the Rempoy Board’s original conception of providing

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<sup>157</sup> TNA BM 8/79, Rempoy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (16.10.1975); ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (22.01.1976); ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (19.02.1976); ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (18.03.1976); ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Fortieth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (22.04.1976); TNA BM 8/83, Rempoy Limited, ‘Managing Director’s Report No. 262’ (April, 1976).

<sup>158</sup> TNA BM 8/79, Rempoy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Forty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (16.12.1976).

<sup>159</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Rempoy Limited, ‘Objectives and Criteria of Success’ (July, 1980), p 62.

‘genuine employment’. In terms of this fundamental link between economic performance and Remploy’s scope, and this purpose of providing ‘genuine employment’, a consensus in the approach to the company across governments in the period is evident. Working within this overall policy directed by successive governments, the Board continued to consider how best to navigate Remploy between what it considered its dual objectives. Having established for the first time how the function of Remploy developed and was understood at a policy level, this chapter will now consider the reality of how the company functioned at the factory level.

### The Local Factory Reality

All previous mention or consideration of Remploy has focused solely upon policy, with the underlying assumption that the factories themselves reflected this as a part of a coherent whole.<sup>160</sup> The reality at the local factory level will now be explored, to consider whether the function of Remploy in the period espoused at a policy level in terms of commercial efficiency and the securing of ‘genuine employment’, reflected the reality at a local level, and whether the scheme indeed operated as a cohesive whole. This will first consider the factory environments and the work which was undertaken. Following this, consideration will be given to personnel within the factory in the form of management and the workers themselves.

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<sup>160</sup> For example see mentions of Remploy, Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy In Britain Since 1750*, p. 135; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 168; Humphries and Gordon, *Out of Sight*, p. 138; Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain*, p. 237; Lande, Lowe and Whiteside, *The Development of the Welfare State 1939-1951*, pp. 203-4; Bridgen and Lowe, *Welfare Policy Under the Conservatives 1951-1964*, p. 262; Shah and Priestley, *Disability and Social Change*, p. 139; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 55-6; Jeffries, ‘The Remploy Resource’, p. 7; Kochan, ‘Remploy: disabled and thriving’; Anderson, ‘Turned into Taxpayers’, p. 469; Elsey, ‘The Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the Two World Wars’, pp. 276-7; Oliver, *The Politics of Disablement*, pp. 88-9; Hyde, ‘Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s’, pp. 199-215; Reiss, *Blind Workers Against Charity*, p. 140; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 183-5; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 109-10.

The initial desire of the Board upon Remploy's creation to establish 'genuine employment' does not seem to have been reflected in the factory environments themselves. To meet the MOL's wish for rapid expansion, and exacerbated by the shortage of materials and capital expenditure cuts in factory building in post-war Britain, many Remploy 'factories' were established in a wide range of less-than-ideal premises.<sup>161</sup> Some of the sites proposed for use included empty cinemas, skating rinks, chapels, and sites suffering subsidence from underground mine workings.<sup>162</sup> Some sites were former voluntary sheltered workshop buildings or Government Training Centres.<sup>163</sup> Many of these were old and dilapidated, were designed for temporary use only, were split over separate areas or floors, or shared amenities with other companies.<sup>164</sup> The Bridgend factory, itself a former Royal Ordnance factory used for shell-filling, was actually split over two buildings half-a-mile apart, and was referred to by the Executive Director of Remploy as a perpetual 'embarrassment to the Company'.<sup>165</sup> Poorer still was the Cleator Moor 'factory', which in reality consisted of four wooden huts, one of which, the main workshop, was originally built during the First World War to temporarily house prisoners of war.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (30.10.1947).

<sup>162</sup> Remploy Limited, *We Have a Part to Play* (28.09.1988); TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 13; TNA LAB 20/453, MOL, 'Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944: Memorandum for Disablement Advisory Committees, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Ltd, D.A.C.Memo. No.18' (November, 1948), p. 1.

<sup>163</sup> 'What type of factory do you work in?', *Remploy News*, 13 (December, 1953).

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>165</sup> 'Remploy Factory, Bridgend', *Remploy News*, 1 (December, 1952); TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 14.

<sup>166</sup> 'The Factory on the Moor', *Remploy News*, 2 (January, 1953). These were only meant to be temporary premises, TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Twentieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (25.03.1947).

Members of the Board who performed factory visits frequently commented on the poor condition or suitability of the premises they found.<sup>167</sup> The Oldham factory was reported to lack both a dust extractor and the space for the storage of raw materials, which therefore had to be stored on the factory floor, leaving the furniture polishing to be undertaken in the canteen.<sup>168</sup> Similar storage issues were reported in other factories such as Salford.<sup>169</sup> The Glasgow factory premises were described as ‘unsuitable for use as a factory’, and the Stockton factory was condemned as ‘dismal’.<sup>170</sup> The premises the company wanted, were built to its own specification by the Ministry of Works.<sup>171</sup> These were all on one floor with ‘airy well-heated workshops, good canteens and kitchens which provided a hot mid-day meal, out-buildings for wheelchairs in many cases and often with pleasant frontages’.<sup>172</sup> However, as can be seen in Table 3.1, by 1952 when there were ninety-one factories, less than half were the custom-designed and built factories which the Board deemed suitable.

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<sup>167</sup> See for example, TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Thirty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (27.04.1948); ‘Minutes of the Thirty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (29.09.1948); ‘Minutes of the Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (24.11.1948); ‘Minutes of the Forty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (25.05.1949).

<sup>168</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Thirty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (27.04.1948).

<sup>169</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Thirty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (29.09.1948).

<sup>170</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (24.11.1948); ‘Minutes of the Forty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (25.05.1949).

<sup>171</sup> TNA BM 10/7, Ministry of Works, ‘British Factories for Disabled Persons Employment Ltd: Model Plans for 50 to 300 Workers’ (June, 1946).

<sup>172</sup> ‘What type of factory do you work in?’, *Remploy News*, 13 (December, 1953).

**Table 3.1: Types of Remploy Factory Premises, 1952.**

Built by the Ministry of Works for the Company	38
Ex-government Training Centre premises	23
Ex-Royal Ordnance Factories	3
Premises acquired and adapted	20
Sheltered Workshops taken over	5
Board of Trade factories	2

Source: TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 34.

As time went on and policy focused more fully on commercial efficiency and 'genuine employment', the adopted premises continued to be replaced by the custom-built Remploy factories.<sup>173</sup> Due to the costs involved this was done piecemeal and as such, problems with premises continued.<sup>174</sup> The Neath factory, for example, was reported to be in such a poor state by the early 1970s that workers were raising concerns about their own safety.<sup>175</sup> In 1976 the continued problems with premises were highlighted in an internal report. Many of the adopted sites still in use were condemned as 'bad for severely disabled people', with poor canteens and lavatories, resulting in low morale among workers.<sup>176</sup> Echoing the original complaints from nearly thirty years earlier, the report also suggested that some premises were 'basically unsuitable' for productive work, with dispersed work areas, sometimes

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<sup>173</sup> For information on premises see TNA BM 3/32.

<sup>174</sup> TNA BM 8/3, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Seventy-Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (20.04.1961); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Twenty-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors' (15.09.1965); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Forty-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors' (22.06.1967); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Forty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (18.01.1968); TNA BM 8/49, 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Fifty-Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (18.07.1968); 'Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (21.11.1973); TNA BM 8/79, 'Minutes of the Three Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (20.03.1975); 'Minutes of the Three Hundred and Sixty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors' (21.04.1978).

<sup>175</sup> TNA BM 3/32, 'Note from Personnel Director, Neath Factory' (31.08.1972).

<sup>176</sup> TNA BM 8/83, Remploy Limited, 'Appendix to Board Report no. 266 "The Location of Uneconomic Factories"' (September, 1976).

across multiple floor levels.<sup>177</sup> The Huddersfield factory, for example, remained in two separate buildings, including one which was split over two floors.<sup>178</sup> This was also the case with the Blackburn factory, in addition to which was noted to ‘have holes in the roof’ which meant it was ‘regularly flooded’.<sup>179</sup> The intention was to press the government for permission to move out of ‘all the remaining unsuitable premises’ as soon as possible.<sup>180</sup> By the end of 1979, however, of eighty-eight Remploy factories then in operation, twenty-six, almost one-third, remained non-purpose built premises.<sup>181</sup> It is clear therefore, that despite the rhetoric around the function of Remploy being to provide ‘genuine employment’ and the attempts to promote commercial efficiency, this was not always reflected in terms of the factory itself, with a wide variation in quality and suitability throughout the period.

In addition to the issues regarding factory premises, there were also problems securing suitable orders to provide the ‘genuine’ work desired. This was particularly problematic in the early years of Remploy’s operation, when there appears to have been a chronic lack both of orders and of materials.<sup>182</sup> The latter was to prove particularly frustrating, with one example being the Hull factory receiving an order for 2,800 doors which, because of the difficulty in obtaining suitable materials, was withdrawn and given to another firm.<sup>183</sup> Worker ‘idle-time’ was also a problem, with no option to reduce employee numbers to reflect work available, in many factories workers were turning up to work regardless of whether or not there was work to be

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> TNA BM 3/67, Remploy Limited, ‘Report on Employment of Disabled People in Remploy - 1979: Appendix 1 Description of Remploy Premises’ (September, 1979).

<sup>182</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Twenty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (27.05.1947); TNA LAB 20/453, ‘Four Year Progress of the Disabled Persons Employment Corporation, D.P.802/1949’.

<sup>183</sup> TNA LAB 20/453, ‘Ministry of Labour Note, D.O.802/1949’ (27.06.1949).

done and being paid to do so.<sup>184</sup> This was not only contrary to the Board's desired provision of 'genuine employment', but also economically damaging and was considered one of the chief reasons for the company's financial losses.<sup>185</sup> Of particular concern was the lack of government department orders. Remploy had no reserved lines of production and had to tender commercially. It had always been assumed however, from the Tomlinson Report itself onwards, that government departments would form a significant proportion of the company's market.<sup>186</sup> This assumption proved to be false however, with Remploy often complaining of a lack of such orders.<sup>187</sup>

Given the lack of the kind of long-term production orders which the company wished to pursue, many factory managers were initially forced to take orders for whatever work could be found. One result of this was that much of the initial work undertaken ended up being the kind of low-skilled busy-work the Board had expressly wished to avoid. Stan Pedrick, credited as one of the very first Remploy employees, later recalled that the Bridgend factory 'was a bit of a shambles to start with – there wasn't any proper work sorted out for us. We had to go round the factory picking up bits of metal which we made into petrol floats for cars'.<sup>188</sup> A further example was given by Jimmy Gill, an employee in the Dundee factory, who recalled how the factory manager would travel around the local farms collecting broken items for the staff to

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<sup>184</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Twenty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors' (27.05.1947).

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.; TNA BM 8/1, 'Minutes of the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (27.01.1948).

<sup>186</sup> Mr. Chetwynd, *Hansard*, 449, col. 781-2 (13.04.1948); *Report of Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 6415 (1943), para. 90-91, p. 34, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 15/05/2018). See also the minutes of the Board of Directors in TNA BM 8/1.

<sup>187</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Thirty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors' (06.04.1948); TNA LAB 20/444, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director's Report No. 34' (21.10.1948).

<sup>188</sup> Quoted in 'A Living Tale', *Remploy News: Golden Jubilee Special* (April, 1995).



repair.<sup>189</sup> Seeking such *ad hoc* work meant that factories would often have numerous short-term small-scale jobs going on at the same time within a factory.<sup>190</sup> This made production efficiency virtually impossible with employees having to be constantly re-trained, and factories re-tooled, to meet the demands of a diverse range of orders.<sup>191</sup>

Following the end of the period of expansion and subsequent focus on commercial efficiency, we do see some change to this. Remploy was restructured from a geographical to a trade grouping with some standard products lines introduced.<sup>192</sup> In doing so, Remploy attempted to focus on the national market, rather than local ones, and secure large-scale orders.<sup>193</sup> The desired new production lines included the sole manufacturing and sales rights for the Swedish *Lundia* shelving range, which remained a key product for the remainder of the period considered in this thesis.<sup>194</sup> Remploy also manufactured branded products and sold them on the national market.<sup>195</sup> In addition to this was the introduction of a sponsorship scheme, in which Remploy provided the factory, management and workers, while the sponsor would provide technical training, equipment and the raw materials. The sponsor would then buy the finished goods. Major sponsors included The Guardian Press Limited, Dowty Mining Equipment Limited, The Standard Motor Company, and Dunlop Rubber

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<sup>189</sup> Remploy Limited, *We Have a Part to Play* (28.09.1988).

<sup>190</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Twenty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors' (27.05.1947).

<sup>191</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), pp. 14-5; TNA LAB 20/453, 'Note to Mr Maher' (27.05.1949).

<sup>192</sup> TNA BM10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 20.

<sup>193</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), pp. 7-8.

<sup>194</sup> TNA BM10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 21.

<sup>195</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), p. 25.

Company Limited.<sup>196</sup> There were also attempts to secure an export market for the company. Though not entirely successful, by the early 1960s Rempoy was exporting goods, including furniture, travel bags, protective clothing and knitwear, to thirty-five countries.<sup>197</sup>

We should not overstate this standardisation and move to new trades in Rempoy however. Despite the organisation into trade groups, there remained significant variation in the precise type of work undertaken in each factory, and it was common for factories to change trades in response to economic conditions, which could prove unpopular with workers.<sup>198</sup> Incorporating a range of trades across its organisation meant that Rempoy was always vulnerable to market fluctuations which occurred throughout the period.<sup>199</sup> Government contracts continued to be in short supply and tendered with very slight margins.<sup>200</sup> This was particularly galling given the focus on commercial efficiency espoused by successive governments, which were then seen to be unsupportive in the case of providing this kind of work. For most factories a steady stream of work was never permanently secured and as a result, instances of short-term *ad-hoc* work, including that found locally by factory managers, continued to be

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<sup>196</sup> TNA BM10/2, Rempoy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Rempoy Limited' (May, 1979).

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> There are a number of reference to this in issues of Rempoy News, see TNA BM 6, and in Board Meetings, see TNA BM 8. For specific examples, see Board Meetings for May 1958, February 1959 in BM 8/2; May 1965, December 1966 in BM 8/3; April 1969, September 1971, October 1971, February 1972, March 1972, April 1972, December 1974 in BM 8/49; May 1975, September 1975, July 1977, October 1977, January 1978, February 1978 Mar 1978, April 1978 in BM 8/79.

<sup>199</sup> TNA BM10/2, Rempoy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Rempoy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 23.

<sup>200</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), para. 190, pp. 15-16, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017). See also TNA BM 8/2, Rempoy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (04.05.1955); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Nineteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (18.04.1956); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Fortieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (19.02.1958); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Forty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (18.06.1958); TNA BM 8/3 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors' (22.12.1966).

undertaken and idle-time for workers continued to be a significant problem.<sup>201</sup> Once again there was significant variation in whether the work undertaken in the local Remploy factory was commercially efficient or reflective of the concept of ‘genuine employment’.

Given that much of Remploy’s operation varied at the local level the position of factory manager would be key in determining how the factory functioned. In one sense there were the practical issues already addressed, such as how effective they were in organising the factory premises and how able they were to secure work when local sourcing was needed. They would also determine to a significant extent the level of focus on productivity or welfare in the factory through their management and relationship with the disabled workers. As might be expected, cases where this balance was well struck, with productive factories and a happy workforce, do not make as notable a mark in the archival records as where issues arose. We do see some examples of such cases in articles on particular factories in *Remploy News*, a regular newsletter produced by the company, which was keen to emphasise the wellbeing of employees and the caring nature of factory managers, with a focus on social and welfare activities.<sup>202</sup> The views and experience of the disabled workforce themselves are not easy to ascertain from the archival records. A letter, written in 1952 was presented to the Board from a worker at the St Helen’s factory who apparently wished to thank the company, ‘in appreciation for all that has been done for me’.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> See Minutes of Board meetings in TNA BM 8, for example, December 1966 in BM 8/3; April 1969, September 1971, October 1971, February 1972, March 1972, April 1972, December 1974 in BM 8/49; May 1975, September 1975, July 1977, October 1977, January 1978, March 1978, April 1978 in BM 8/79.

<sup>202</sup> See *Remploy News* in TNA BM 6. See also ‘Steady Growth of Sheltered Employment’, *Financial Times*, (07.04.1970).

<sup>203</sup> TNA BM 8/4, ‘Letter to Mr McDonnell’ (16.12.1952).

Describing her initial hesitance at working in a factory, she notes that she soon felt comfortable and engaged in her work:

Soon confidence in myself returned, and now I go merrily on, feeling that again life is worth while. We disabled people do appreciate all that is being done for us by Remploy. We are all so happy, working in our pleasant, modern factory, with 'music while you work', at jobs specially chosen for us. So days at Remploy pass quickly by with a smile and a song.<sup>204</sup>

Undoubtedly there may have been factory managers who reflected this image, and while wellbeing and productivity are not necessarily mutually exclusive concepts, the overall impression from the records is that factory managers were in most cases focused upon maximising the productivity of the factory and operating them as commercially as possible.<sup>205</sup> This appears to have been the case for the simple reason that it was on the basis of productivity and economic efficiency that factories and their managers were ultimately judged by Remploy's Head Office. The Labour MP John Paton had expressed in Parliament in 1952 that the focus on commercial efficiency had resulted in 'distinct pressure from headquarters to step up the productive efficiency' of the factory in his constituency.<sup>206</sup> It was also at this time that the first dismissal of a factory manager owing to poor financial results occurred.<sup>207</sup> This measurement of factory success remained throughout the period, with senior management in Remploy noting in the 1970s that factory managers were primarily 'concerned with their factory costs' owing to the targets used by Head Office to

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

<sup>205</sup> TNA LAB 20/444, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director Circular 7A/1' (06.10.1948).

<sup>206</sup> Mr. John Paton, *Hansard* (06.05.1952), vol. 500, cc. 342-52; Mr. John Paton, *Hansard* (17.06.1952), vol. 502, cc. 991-2.

<sup>207</sup> This was at the Blackwood factory where the loss per man had increased from £4 18s 6 ½ d to £7 6s 11 ½ d, *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), para. 177, p. 14, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017).

monitor them.<sup>208</sup> Such remarks echoed the understood opinion of a number of factory managers themselves who had previously expressed that the company policy ‘was heavily weighted on the production aspect’.<sup>209</sup> The rhetoric described earlier in this chapter from Board members of the need to balance production efficiency with the wellbeing of employees, particularly following the appointment of Mr Philpott as Managing Director in the 1970s, who himself suggested that from his visits to factories there was too much focus on the commercial aspect, seems not to have been reflected in the reality for factory managers.<sup>210</sup> This was noted in Remply’s internal Hailey Report at the end of the period considered in this thesis, with factory managers complaining of the continuing disconnect between the policy espoused by the Board about Remply’s priority of providing employment, and the reality of their day-to-day dealings with Head Office in which factory performance was based entirely on measures of productivity.<sup>211</sup> A factory manager could therefore do all they could to promote the wellbeing of employees, but ultimately the systems in place at Head Office to judge performance were based entirely on a factory’s commercial results.

As a result we do see a number of instances of workers expressing their disapproval at employment conditions, either directly, or through reports to their local MP or to the press. This was particularly prevalent in the immediate years following the focus on commercial efficiency. In 1951, the Labour MP John McKay raised concerns in the Commons at reports of ‘dissatisfaction in the Remply Factory at Wallsend’,

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<sup>208</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remply Limited, ‘Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment in Remply Ltd’ (27.01.1975); Remply Limited, ‘Pontefract Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment at Remply Limited’ (28.01.1975).

<sup>209</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remply Limited, ‘Report on a Mentally Disabled Teach-in’ (05.12.1974).

<sup>210</sup> TNA BM 8/79, Remply Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (22.01.1976); TNA BM 10/48, Remply Limited, ‘Objectives and Criteria of Success’ (July, 1980), p. 62.

<sup>211</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remply Limited, ‘Objectives and Criteria of Success’ (July, 1980), p. 62.

owing to pressures to increase factory productivity.<sup>212</sup> A further case was reported the following year with the Labour MP for Cardiff West, and later Speaker of the House of Commons, George Thomas, claiming an atmosphere of ‘considerable apprehension amongst the employees at the Treforest Remploym factory’.<sup>213</sup> In April 1954, a letter was sent to ‘all Members of Parliament, the Board of Directors of Remploym and to the National Press’, from the employees of the Croydon Factory, complaining about the productivity pressures in the factory.<sup>214</sup> The same year, the Labour MP Mrs Elizabeth Braddock, well-known as an outspoken champion of working people, raised the issue regarding the Liverpool factory.<sup>215</sup> In 1955, it was the manager at the Swansea factory who warned the Board of an atmosphere of ‘gloomy despondency’ among his workers.<sup>216</sup> Though fewer, such instances did continue, with an employee at the Aberdeen factory writing to his MP in 1960 to complain about harsh conditions in the factory.<sup>217</sup> Similarly, in 1972 the Labour MP for Rhondda West, Mr. Alec Jones noted ‘Remploym workers in Wales are feeling extremely disgruntled at present’.<sup>218</sup> The same year, the Managing Director was sent an anonymous letter from an employee at the Bolton Factory, claiming to be writing ‘on behalf of 90% at this factory’, to complain about the treatment by the factory manager, exclaiming ‘we are sick and tired of the manager, he should be sacked before we are at rock bottom’.<sup>219</sup> Occasionally this dissatisfaction did lead to industrial action. In 1960, unrest was reported in the

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<sup>212</sup> Mr. John McKay, *Hansard* (24.07.1951), vol. 491, cc. 180-1.

<sup>213</sup> Mr. G. Thomas, *Hansard* (17.06.1952), vol. 502, cc. 991-2.

<sup>214</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploym Limited, ‘Minutes of the Ninety-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (28.04.1954).

<sup>215</sup> For this incident see TNA LAB 43/204. E. Vallance & R. Ingham, ‘Braddock [née Bamber], Elizabeth Margaret [Bessie] (1899–1970), trade union activist and politician’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (06.01.2005), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-37214> (accessed 04/08/2019).

<sup>216</sup> TNA BM 8/23, ‘Note from Works Manager to Controller, Woodworking Group’ (28.03.1955).

<sup>217</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploym Limited, ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (15.06.1960).

<sup>218</sup> Mr Alec Jones, *Hansard* (01.05.1972), vol. 836 cc.11-2.

<sup>219</sup> TNA BM 8/84, ‘Letter to Managing Director’ (1976).

Barking factory, with the employees intending to go on strike.<sup>220</sup> In 1970 there was a strike at the Swansea factory lasting ‘nearly two days, following the discharge of two disabled employees’, and in 1976 the Motherwell factory, described as one with ‘a history of militancy’, went on a ‘go-slow’.<sup>221</sup> While such incidents were alarming and indicate the existence of resistance from some workers to productivity pressures, they were understood by the Board at the time to be isolated incidents rather than as representing widespread dissatisfaction. Whether this is indeed the case is not clear, but they serve to highlight how the productivity pressures could impact negatively on the workers themselves.

It is apparent from these examples that there would be no single ‘Remploi factory experience’ for workers in the period, and that the idea of Remploi representing a cohesive scheme is misplaced. Wide variation in terms of environment, work and conditions were particularly notable in the early part of Remploi’s existence, and despite some standardisation, clearly continued. This highlights the localised nature of Remploi. In one case a disabled worker may have attended a modern purpose-built factory and engaged in meaningful, regular and satisfying work on a standard product line under a considerate manager. In another case, a disabled worker may have attended a poor-quality adapted building, engaged in some simple busy work with time spent idle and placed under pressure from a factory manager desperate to improve their production results for Head Office. In terms of the latter, this does appear to have been considered the more common outlook of factory managers

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<sup>220</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploi Limited, ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (17.02.1960); ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixty-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (16.03.1960).

<sup>221</sup> TNA BM 8/49, Remploi Limited, ‘Minutes of the Two-Hundred and Seventy-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (19.02.1970); TNA BM 8/79, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Fortieth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (22.04.1976).

themselves, who responded to the targets set for them by Head Office, despite the rhetoric of members of the Board, to maximise the productivity of their factory.

### Conclusions

It is clear from the analysis undertaken here that the notion that Remploy had a clear uncomplicated purpose upon its creation is entirely misplaced. This purpose continued to be contested as the company began to operate. Furthermore, contrary to the dominant interpretation that Remploy existed as a humanitarian concern throughout this period, only to suffer harsh economic rationalisation under Thatcher in the 1980s, it is apparent that commercial efficiency was highlighted as a key component for Remploy from the very beginning. This was the view of the Board of Remploy themselves and something central to their understood conception of the company providing 'genuine employment'. This was not the initial view of the MOL and of MPs who instead demanded the rapid expansion of the company as a social service meeting the need for providing sheltered employment for all those eligible to receive it. However with costs rising, and with the expansion of the company making the concept of 'genuine employment' unworkable, the Remploy Board and the Treasury were allied in demanding a slow-down from the MOL and succeeded in attaining it. Thus by the 1950s the commercial efficiency of Remploy, in concert with the prevailing economic conditions, had become a paramount issue in determining its development.

This did lead to protest from the Labour Party during its period in opposition in the 1950s and early 1960s. Contrary therefore, to the view that disabled people were only discovered 'politically' from the 1960s, it is clear that in the form of Remploy,



disability was part of a major policy debate far earlier.<sup>222</sup> Once in government however, the Labour Party was to adopt the same policy towards Remploy and thereby end any serious reconsideration of its purpose. The pattern emerged of each government seemingly valuing Remploy and expressing the wish to see it expand, but the commercial strength of the company, and the expenditure limits of each government when faced with economic difficulties, ultimately curtailing such expansion. Thus the ‘stop-go’ approach to public spending noted in the period more generally, certainly applies to Remploy.<sup>223</sup> As such we can see that in terms of a consensus, though financial support and pressure to reduce costs varied, the fundamental principle established by 1950 that Remploy’s commercial strength, and economic conditions generally, were always to limit its scope remained the case for each party in government. Despite some continued opposition to this in Parliament and some attempts to balance this at Board level within Remploy, the overall policy for sheltered employment was set. As such the findings from this chapter support the notion of a ‘consensus in action’, with both parties ultimately following the same approach when in government, if not demonstrating a unified ideology, for much of the period considered in this thesis.<sup>224</sup>

Working within this overall policy, the Board did attempt to expand provision and expressed a wish to mitigate the focus on commercial efficiency to a degree. Peter Dorey has suggested that the Boards of nationalised industries commonly faced difficulties in attempting to operate their company as a business in the market

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<sup>222</sup> Hampton, ‘Discovering Disability’, pp. 70-1; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 8, 50; Sainsbury, ‘Disabled People and the Personal Social Services’, pp. 183-8; E. Younghusband, *Social Work in Britain*, pp. 210-11.

<sup>223</sup> Kavanagh and Morris, *Consensus Politics from Attlee to Major*, p. 38.

<sup>224</sup> Millward, ‘Invalid definitions, invalid responses’, pp. 165, 284; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 244.

economy whilst being under overall ministerial responsibility.<sup>225</sup> He suggested that this often resulted in a ‘messy’ compromise as they were thus ‘sometimes put in a position whereby they were simultaneously expected to act both as a commercial enterprise and as a social or public service’.<sup>226</sup> This echoes something of the apparent difficulties faced by the Remploy Board. It seems therefore, the description of an ‘uneasy balance’ between humanitarian and economic aims described by Lonsdale and Topliss, is apt when considering the discussions which occurred at Board level within Remploy.<sup>227</sup>

The common justification for the overall policy towards Remploy was provided by reference to the Board’s initial conception of providing ‘genuine employment’, with commercial efficiency an apparent key requisite for this. It seems this was believed by the Board in the beginning to be important and part of the service the company provided to its disabled workers. It is not possible to gauge the degree to which this sentiment was genuinely shared by the successive governments which evoked it, but it does not seem overly cynical to suggest that this was also used as an excuse to limit expenditure and press for further commercial efficiency from the company. It is clear however, that this policy of commercial efficiency to provide ‘genuine employment’ was not always reflected in terms of the reality at factory level. There was always wide local variation in Remploy in terms of factory environments, work and conditions which belie the assumption that Remploy represented a cohesive whole with central policy reflecting a uniform factory reality. Workers in Remploy could clearly experience a very different type of sheltered employment depending on conditions in their local factory. The overall imperative however remained the drive

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<sup>225</sup> Dorey, *British Politics Since 1945*, p. 9.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Lonsdale, *Work and Inequality*, p. 138; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 55-7.

for commercial efficiency, which was keenly felt by factory managers. Having established the reality of the primary function of Remploy, the following chapter will consider the workforce of the company in order to reveal who was being employed by Remploy and upon what basis.

## **Chapter Four**

### **The Remploy Workforce: Eligibility, Recruitment and Retention**

Remploy provided the vast majority of sheltered employment in Britain during the period of the classic welfare state. While there is no complete breakdown of how many disabled people were employed by the company overall during this time, as those that left for various reasons were replaced, the figures available suggest that by 1979, Remploy had provided sheltered employment for more than 40,000 disabled people.<sup>1</sup> The composition of Remploy's workforce has largely been taken for granted by academics across disciplines as being simply 'disabled people', 'severely disabled' people', or in the case of Borsay, Bolderson and Thane, disabled people who were deemed unproductive workers.<sup>2</sup> The assumption in these cases is that Remploy simply, and successfully, followed the remit established for it by the DPEA in employing those designated severely disabled, referred to as 'Section II'. This view of Remploy implies it functioned as a catch-all scheme for severely disabled people, with a universal and open standard of employee recruitment and retention. This has important implications for our understanding of disability in post-war Britain as such a narrative runs contrary to the widely-held image of the welfare state excluding

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<sup>1</sup> TNA BM 3/67, Remploy Limited, 'Report on Employment of Disabled People in Remploy – 1979: Appendix 9'; TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 30; TNA BM 10/53, Remploy Ltd, 'Remploy Facts' (1986), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Hampton, 'Discovering Disability', p. 80; Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain*, p. 237; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 168; Hyde, 'Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s', p. 200; Brigden and Lowe, *Welfare Policy Under the Conservatives 1951-1964*, pp. 262-3; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 109; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 56; Reiss, *Blind Workers Against Charity*, p. 139; Elsey, 'The Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the Two World Wars', pp. 276-7; Anderson, 'Turned into Taxpayers', p. 469; Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 71; Land, Lowe and Whiteside, *The Development of the Welfare State 1939-1951*, p. 204; Mantin, 'Coalmining and the National Scheme for Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the First World War', p. 170; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 135; Bolderson, 'The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance', p. 178; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, p. 225.

disabled people, and the other measures of the DPEA failing to live up to their initial promise.<sup>3</sup> This is also important when we consider that securing ‘full employment’ among the general population was a key element in the classic welfare state settlement, and has been seen as a major achievement by scholars such as Lowe, Glennerster and Page.<sup>4</sup> This chapter will therefore consider whether this was indeed achieved, as seems to be implied, for the Section II population.

In some cases, descriptions of Remploy’s workforce have highlighted particular groups. One popular view holds that Remploy provided employment primarily for ex-service personnel. This has framed Remploy’s own conception of its origins and is the understanding which has seeped into public consciousness, referenced in a number of media reports on the company and Historic England’s ‘Disability in Time and Place’ project.<sup>5</sup> This has also occurred to a degree in academia in which disabled ex-service personnel have been considered as having received preferential treatment in terms of welfare and employment.<sup>6</sup> Anderson highlighted Remploy as part of the continued

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<sup>3</sup> Hampton, ‘Discovering Disability’, pp. 75-7; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 1; Bolderson, ‘The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance’, pp. 170-2; Roulstone and Prideaux, *Understanding Disability Policy*, pp. 26-32; Hyde, ‘Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s’, p. 200.

<sup>4</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 80-1, 115-9; Page, *Revisiting the Welfare State*, p. 38; Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, pp. 267-8; Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, p. 5; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 241; Sainsbury, ‘Disabled People and the Personal Social Services’, p. 184.

<sup>5</sup> ‘Who we are’, *Remploy* (2017),

[http://www.remploy.co.uk/info/20124/find\\_out\\_more/72/who\\_we\\_are](http://www.remploy.co.uk/info/20124/find_out_more/72/who_we_are) (accessed 27/06/2017).

‘Remploy’s Journey’, *Remploy* (2017)

[http://www.remploy.co.uk/downloads/file/141/remloys\\_journeypdf](http://www.remploy.co.uk/downloads/file/141/remloys_journeypdf) (accessed 27/06/2017).

Fox, ‘What are Remploy workers doing now?’, *BBC News* (31.11.2014), <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-29843567> (accessed 27/06/2017); Beattie, ‘Hundreds of axed disabled workers still jobless TWO years after Remploy factory closures’, *Mirror* (05.01.2015), <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/hundreds-axed-disabled-workers-still-4919835> (accessed 27/06/2017); ‘Remploy’s history as specialist disabled employer remembered as final factories close’, *ITV Report*, (31.10.2013), <http://www.itv.com/news/2013-10-31/final-remploy-factory-closes/> (accessed 27/06/2017); Historic England, ‘Disability History: Disability, Rehabilitation and Work’ (2017), <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/disability-history/1945-to-the-present-day/disability-rehabilitation-and-work/> (accessed 11/08/2017).

<sup>6</sup> Slorach, *A Very Capitalist Condition*, p. 141; Gagen, ‘Remastering the Body’, pp. 536-7; Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, pp. 37-9; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 53-4.

‘special treatment’ afforded to this distinct group.<sup>7</sup> Anderson has further suggested that Remploy also concentrated on providing employment for those with particular disabilities.<sup>8</sup> In all these descriptions of Remploy, it is assumed that the production workforce consisted entirely of disabled people. This is also implicit in descriptions of sheltered employment as ‘segregated employment’, and is the current understanding within Remploy itself as an aspect of its past which distinguished the company from its international equivalents for whom the inclusion of non-disabled people in the workforce was the norm.<sup>9</sup> By contrast, Topliss claimed in 1979 that the inclusion of a proportion of non-disabled workers in the production workforce was ‘always envisaged’ for Remploy.<sup>10</sup> This chapter will explore this aspect of Remploy by addressing the fundamental question of who was employed by Remploy and upon what basis, thereby offering a corrective to all of these assumptions and interpretations which have been promulgated in the absence of detailed examination.

This will begin with an exploration of statutory eligibility for sheltered employment under the terms of the DPEA. It will then be determined whether ‘full employment’ was indeed achieved for the severely disabled classified as Section II. This chapter will then consider how selection for Remploy was undertaken, beginning with the popular notion that Remploy focused upon employing ex-service personnel. The process of recruitment into the company itself in terms of central policy and the local factory reality will then be considered. Moving on from this process of recruitment, this chapter will address the question of retention in Remploy once employment was

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<sup>7</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 183.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Millward, ‘Invalid definitions, invalid responses’, pp. 184-5; Humphries and Gordon, *Out of Sight*, p. 138; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 168; Slorach, *A Very Capitalist Condition*, p. 141; Hyde, ‘Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s’, p. 200; Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 74.

<sup>10</sup> Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 55-6.

gained. The case presented by Anderson that Rempoy focused on employing people with specific disabilities, will then be analysed, through exploration of what was referred to by the company as its 'disability mix'. Finally, there will be an investigation of the assumption that Rempoy only employed disabled people in its production workforce. This chapter will thereby provide the first detailed analysis of who was being employed by Rempoy and upon what basis.

### Eligibility Under the Terms of the DPEA

Entry to Rempoy involved a specific process which all potential workers had to follow. The first step to entering a Rempoy factory was registering as 'disabled' upon the Disabled Persons' Employment Register, which has itself received only limited attention from historians.<sup>11</sup> This was the voluntary mechanism established by the DPEA for gaining access to any of its provisions including sheltered employment. Even at this stage there were regulations limiting who could join the register. First, a person had to be considered disabled in accordance with the definition of the Act, which stated that:

'Disabled person' – means a person who, on account of injury, disease or congenital deformity, is substantially handicapped in obtaining or keeping employment, or in undertaking work on his own account, of a kind which apart from that injury, disease or deformity would be suited to his age, experience and qualifications.<sup>12</sup>

The Act further stipulated that a person's disability must be likely to last for six months or more, that the person must be at least fourteen years old, be resident in

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<sup>11</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 135; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 49.

<sup>12</sup> DPEA, para. 1.

Great Britain, and be willing to undertake training or employment.<sup>13</sup> Those disqualified from registering included disabled people subject to treatment under the Lunacy and Mental Treatments Acts, prisoners, full-time hospital patients and those deemed to be of ‘bad character’.<sup>14</sup> It was also possible to be removed from the register for refusal to attend training, rehabilitation or employment offered.<sup>15</sup>

This legislative framework remained largely the same throughout the period covered in this thesis, and indeed into the 1990s.<sup>16</sup> The only significant changes were that from 1958, a person’s disability had to be likely to continue for twelve months instead of six, and in 1959, mentally-ill patients were no longer disqualified from registering.<sup>17</sup> Such changes provide an important example of how ‘disability’ can be defined and how these definitions can change over time.<sup>18</sup> Here we see an example of what Millward has referred to as a ‘bureaucratic’ conception of disability, as one defined for purposes of policy and legislation.<sup>19</sup> This conception in particular was not static, as can be seen here with a shifting boundary in what was accepted as ‘disabled’ in terms of the aims of the legislation, with the introduction of a previously excluded group in those mentally-ill patients. Whilst such stipulations meant that some people

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<sup>13</sup> DPEA, para. 7; Statutory Rule and Order (1945), No. 938 in Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 117.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.; See also TNA LAB 20/109.

<sup>15</sup> Statutory Rule and Order (1945), No. 938 in Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 117.

<sup>16</sup> TNA BM 10/34, Remploi Limited, ‘Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploi’, p. 9; TNA ET 2/32, ESA, ‘The Disabled Persons Register’ (1977). DE, *The Net Exchequer Costs of Sheltered Employment*, Research Paper No. 69 (1989), p. 3; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 135. Topliss notes the continued existence of the register, Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 49; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 170, who notes that there were no fundamental changes in these employment policies until the 1990s.

<sup>17</sup> *Disabled Persons Employment Act 1958* amendments. Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 117.

<sup>18</sup> See Millward, ‘Invalid definitions, invalid responses’, pp. 14-20; Millward, ‘Social Security Policy and the Early Disability Movement’, p. 281 ; Sainsbury, ‘Disabled People and the Personal Social Services’, pp. 183-4; J.E. Bickenbach, *Physical Disability and Social Policy* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1993), pp. 20-3; T. Moreton, ‘Sheltered employment: Gateway or ‘road block’?’, *Personnel Review*, vol. 21, no. 6 (1992), p. 40.

<sup>19</sup> Millward, ‘Invalid definitions, invalid responses’, p. 43.



would be excluded from registering and thereby excluded from Remploy, it is worth noting the relatively broad definition of 'disability' considered in the register.

In addition to those who may be automatically excluded, there were a larger number of disabled people who, despite being eligible, chose not to register. Topliss noted in 1979 a 'steady decline in total numbers on the Register since the peak year of 1950'.<sup>20</sup> Figures indeed show that from a peak of 936,196 people on the register, both employed and unemployed, in 1950, by 1961 this had dropped to 666,454, and by 1977 had reduced again to 532,402.<sup>21</sup> Remploy themselves estimated that by 1979 the overall number of people who were likely eligible for registration should they have wished to do so was between 1.1 and 1.2 million.<sup>22</sup> Several reasons have been suggested, both by Remploy at the time, and others such as Topliss since, as to why eligible disabled people chose not to register. Chief among these were that people may not have been aware of the need to register; that people felt registration was unnecessary for them based on their own circumstances; that people saw little benefit to themselves from registration; that people could receive more money in the form of cash benefits by not working; or that people disliked the idea and associated stigma of being identified as 'disabled'.<sup>23</sup> As Topliss suggested such reasons might be less applicable to severely disabled people, as they were less likely to be able to find

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<sup>20</sup> Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 50.

<sup>21</sup> TNA BM 10/34, Remploy Limited, 'Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploy, Table 1: Analysis of Disabled Register' (June, 1981), p. 11.

<sup>22</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success' (July, 1980), p. 18.

<sup>23</sup> TNA BM 10/34 Remploy Limited, 'Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploy' (June, 1981), pp. 9-10; TNA BM 8/3, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Eightieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (18.10.1961); TNA BM 3/47, 'Note from Cardiff Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director' (28.01.1975); TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), p. 33; TNA BM 3/71, Remploy Limited, 'Report on Factory Managers Meeting "B"' (May, 1979). Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 51; Gleeson, *Geographies of Disability*, p. 132.

employment without registering.<sup>24</sup> This is partially supported by the evidence in Table 4.1, which indicates that for the years 1977, 1978 and 1979 there were more unregistered Section I disabled people than were registered, with the opposite the case for Section II. This is of course a very limited sample, but it does align with what has been suggested by Topliss. So while there might be fewer disabled people who would be designated as Section II who chose not to register, there was still likely to have been a significant number. With registration a pre-requisite for gaining work in Remploy, this limited the potential recruitment pool.<sup>25</sup>

**Table 4.1: Unemployed Disabled People Seeking Employment through MSC Local Offices, 1977-79.**

	Section I		Section II	
	Registered	Unregistered	Registered	Unregistered
1977	63,480	65,391	10,901	3,884
1978	58,479	68,148	9,719	3,991
1979	51,067	67,862	8,314	3,653

Source: TNA BM 10/34, Remploy Limited, 'Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploy, Table II' (June, 1981), p. 13.

In order to be eligible for employment in Remploy, a person, having being able and willing to join the register, had then to be assessed as being Section II and therefore as someone requiring sheltered employment. The decision to classify disabled persons as being either Section I or Section II was taken by MOL officials in the position of Disablement Resettlement Officers (DROs). DROs worked at local employment exchanges and categorised disabled persons as either Section I or II using medical

<sup>24</sup> Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 51.

<sup>25</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success' (July, 1980), p. 19.

reports and guidelines produced and distributed by the Ministry.<sup>26</sup> Unfortunately, records pertaining to the actual assessments which led to disabled people being categorised have not survived in the records of Remploy or the MOL. There was, however, a MOL circular from 1946 which briefly outlined the steps for determining if someone was Section II.<sup>27</sup> This suggested that the DRO should take into account the medical evidence submitted, the person's employment history, and the results of ongoing efforts to place them in employment.<sup>28</sup> A letter to *The Times* in 1952 from a doctor involved in the process claimed that the medical evidence sent to DROs was based on a comprehensive medical examination producing a medical report which included 'an evaluation of the person's stamina and general capacity for work, a physical and functional analysis, and an indication of environmental conditions considered to be unsuitable'.<sup>29</sup> A specimen medical report form for use by DROs from 1945 corresponds to this outline, suggesting that this was indeed the format used.<sup>30</sup> A disabled person was thereby defined as being Section II based entirely upon a combination of the opinions of medical professionals and bureaucrats. The former assessed their physical capacity, with the latter complementing this with their employment history and prospects, and ultimately deciding their categorisation. There is no mention in any record of the opinion of disabled people themselves having had any impact upon this assessment.

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<sup>26</sup> TNA BM 10/12, Remploy Limited, 'Report of a Survey of Remploy Undertaken by Organisation and Methods Division of H.M. Treasury' (June, 1955), para. 6. For medical reports see TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, 'Minutes of the Ninth Meeting' (12.11.1946). Also see Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 196-7; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 52-4.

<sup>27</sup> TNA LAB 20/215, MOL, 'Training and Employment Under Special Conditions of Registered Disabled Persons Who Are Severely Disabled' (1946).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> 'Work for the Disabled', *The Times* (20.10.1952).

<sup>30</sup> TNA LAB 20/127, MOL, 'Specimen, D.P.1 form' (1945).

The inadequacies of this system of administration have been briefly highlighted by Anderson, who noted that DROs were not medical professionals and only initially underwent a three-day training course, which was clearly insufficient to provide the knowledge required to interpret the medical report and determine the employment prospects for disabled candidates.<sup>31</sup> From the further examination undertaken here, it is apparent that the initial result upon the commencement of the register was a wide variation among localities as to the numbers assessed as being Section II.<sup>32</sup> The MOL initially attempted to combat this by circulating more detailed instructions on assessment, creating a new position of District Disablement Resettlement Officer to oversee the training of DROs, and promoting closer involvement with medical professionals to assist in cases of uncertainty.<sup>33</sup> This does not appear to have been successful, with continued variation in assessments causing concern.<sup>34</sup> The issue was eventually raised in Parliament in 1957 by the Labour MP Edward Evans. With a background in 'blind and deaf teaching', and having served as the Chairman of the Minister of Health's Advisory Committee on Handicapped Persons in 1949 as well as then being Chairman of the National Institute for the Deaf, Evans spoke with some authority when bemoaning the quality of training DRO's received.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 197. See also TNA LAB 20/189 and LAB 20/241 for MOL concerns.

<sup>32</sup> TNA LAB 20/253, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Regional Representatives Conference Minutes' (18.12.1945); TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, 'Minutes of the Ninth Meeting' (12.11.1946).

<sup>33</sup> TNA LAB 20/253, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Regional Executive Officers' Conference No. 4' (19.02.1946). Remploy had contacted the MOL earlier in the month to press for the confirmation of the procedure for assessment, TNA LAB 20/201, 'Note to Colonel Robertson' (02.02.1946). Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 197. See also TNA LAB 20/127, MOL, 'Survey of DRO Placing Work' (May, 1950).

<sup>34</sup> TNA LAB 20/381, NACED, 'Special Survey of the Disabled Live File' (15.04.1948).

<sup>35</sup> Mr Edward Evans, *Hansard* (07.06.1957), vol. 571 cc. 1595; 'Obituary: Mr. Edward Evans', *The Times* (31.03.1960).

The MOL made further attempts to improve training during the 1960s, with a surviving outline of the basic training program revealing an extended timetable over twenty days which included a mixture of talks on legislation and processes, as well as visits to hospitals, Remploy and other sheltered workshops.<sup>36</sup> There also appear to have been additional training courses made available to DROs, including a medical course which provided sessions on a wide range of relevant topics such as ‘Diseases of the Chest’, ‘Some Problems of Rehabilitation’ and ‘Orthopaedic Conditions’ with the aim to better understand the effects of various conditions on employment prospects.<sup>37</sup> Aside from this increase in training, the overall system remained unchanged throughout the period considered in this thesis, and indeed into the 1990s, with the role of DROs remaining the same and with categorisation continuing to be based on guidelines provided by the government employment department and a medical assessment.<sup>38</sup> The wide local variations in who was designated as either Section I or II also continued throughout the period, with Remploy noting in 1980 that the decision remained ‘personally with the DRO’ and therefore varied ‘significantly, between one DRO and another’.<sup>39</sup> Classification as Section II was therefore not only a medical classification, but also reflected the individual DRO’s assessment of the candidate in relation to his own views and the local employment situation.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> TNA LAB 20/1140, MOL, ‘Basic Training of D.R.Os’ (1965).

<sup>37</sup> TNA LAB 20/1140, MOL, ‘Programme for D.R.O. Training Course at St. James’s Hospital, Leeds’ (June, 1965).

<sup>38</sup> Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 53; Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 71.

<sup>39</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, ‘Objectives and Criteria of Success’ (July, 1980), pp. 19, 26; TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, ‘Minutes of the Ninth Meeting’ (12.11.1946); TNA LAB 20/707, Remploy Limited, ‘Note to Mr. W. Taylor’ (30.03.1949); TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, ‘Disabled People Entry Standards into Remploy Limited’ (03.02.1975). Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 53.

<sup>40</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), p. 31.

Eligibility for employment with Remploy was therefore limited in terms of legislation and central policy, and was subject to local variation in the implementation of legislation by gatekeepers in the form of DROs. Eligibility for access to a Remploy factory was therefore not open to all ‘severely disabled’ people as has sometimes been assumed, but was limited to a select group who complied with the definitions and stipulations of the DPEA, chose to register, and were then deemed to be Section II. This reveals a significant barrier to accessing sheltered employment, but having been assessed as Section II, such persons were then supposedly eligible for a place in sheltered employment.

#### ‘Full Employment’ for Section II People?

The DPEA effectively created a distinct population in terms of employment, those designated as Section II. The concept of ‘full employment’ for the general working population was a key aspect of the classic welfare state, providing the foundation for the contributory social security system, and was an understood and accepted priority for each government.<sup>41</sup> It has also been highlighted by academics as a genuine achievement, with employment maintained at a ‘historically high level’ during the period.<sup>42</sup> As was highlighted in the introduction to this chapter, academics have often assumed that Remploy simply employed Section II people, raising the possibility that it provided ‘full employment’ for this group. This notion that Remploy provided universal employment for this discreet group of disabled people can be refuted very simply. Chapter Three has already indicated how employee numbers in Remploy fluctuated in response to economic and political demands, and, as Appendix 1

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<sup>41</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 115-9; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 70; Coxall and Robins, *British Politics Since the War*, pp. 50-1.

<sup>42</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 80-1, 115-9.; Page, *Revisiting the Welfare State*, p. 38; Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, pp. 267-8; Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, p. 5; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 241.

indicates, Remploy did not provide employment for all those registered as Section II, at any point during the period considered here.

Although Remploy was the chief provider of sheltered employment, it was not the only option available. The ‘mixed economy’ of sheltered employment will be considered more fully in Chapter Six, but it is referenced here to consider the overall level of unemployment for the discrete population of Section II people for whom sheltered employment was to be provided. Table 4.2 indicates the numbers employed by both Remploy and the combination of the various other providers of sheltered employment. With the data available it is then possible to calculate the percentage of ‘Section II’ people who were unemployed from 1957 to 1978. This can then be compared with the unemployment levels of the general population, which during the period when ‘full employment’ was pursued as policy prior to the severe financial crises of the mid-1970s which saw the abandonment of this principle, rarely reached three per cent.<sup>43</sup> The contrast with the level of unemployment for ‘Section II’ people is startling, with unemployment for this group reaching a low-point of 34.9% and an increasing trend for much of the period, reaching a high-point of 53.3% in 1972. These people, unable to secure a place in sheltered employment, might find themselves signposted to occupational therapy centres, industrial rehabilitation units or other welfare programmes.<sup>44</sup> Some may have been able to secure work in open employment, but for many it would mean reliance upon whatever cash benefits their particular circumstances entailed, if at all.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Pemberton, ‘The Transformation of the Economy’, p. 192; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 317-8.

<sup>44</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), p. 32. See also TNA ET 2/32. Shah and Priestley, *Disability and Social Change*, pp. 138-9.

<sup>45</sup> For consideration of the development of the various benefits see Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, p. 146.

These figures are also far higher than those suggested for disabled people generally. Unemployment levels for disabled people tended to be higher than the general population over the period, with Hampton suggesting that they were at times ‘three to four times greater’ and figures showing that by 1975 the unemployment rate for disabled people generally was 13-14 per cent.<sup>46</sup> The disparity between these figures and those for Section II people specifically highlights the need to examine groupings such as ‘disabled people’ more closely, as in this case it is clear that the unemployment rate for those designated Section II was far higher than was generally the case for disabled people.

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<sup>46</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 196.



**Table 4.2: Breakdown of Section II Unemployed and UK average, 1957-1978.**

Year	Remploy	Other sheltered workshops	Total in sheltered workshops	Section II registered unemployed	Percentage unemployed	
					Section II	UK population average <sup>47</sup>
1957	6,083	814	6,897	3,702	34.9%	1.6%
1958	6,185	909	7,094	-	-	2.2%
1959	6,156	1,132	7,288	4,199	36.6%	2.3%
1960	6,303	1,167	7,470	4,313	36.6%	1.7%
1961	6,203	1,181	7,384	4,543	38.1%	1.6%
1962	6,359	1,319	7,678	4,864	38.8%	2.1%
1963	6,291	1,460	7,751	5,511	41.6%	2.6%
1964	6,519	1,792	8,311	5,978	41.8%	1.7%
1965	6,823	2,022	8,845	6,141	41%	1.5%
1966	6,817	2,023	8,840	6,382	41.9%	1.6%
1967	6,817	2,208	9,057	7,533	45.4%	2.5%
1968	7,179	2,408	9,605	8,630	47.3%	2.5%
1969	7,447	2,444	9,891	9,602	49.3%	2.5%
1970	7,505	2,625	10,130	10,013	49.7%	2.7%
1971	7,518	2,748	10,266	11,120	52%	3.5%
1972	7,746	2,880	10,626	12,105	53.3%	3.8%
1973	7,959	3,165	11,124	11,164	50.1%	2.7%
1974	8,077	3,277	11,354	10,989	49.2%	2.6%
1975	8,308	3,170	11,478	11,101	49.2%	4.2%
1976	8,514	3,228	11,742	11,457	49.4%	5.7%
1977	7,972	3,410	11,382	10,901	48.9%	6.2%
1978	7,894	3,577	11,471	9,719	45.9%	6.1%

Source: TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success: Appendix 5' (1980), p. 73. The Government Statistical Service, *Unemployment statistics from 1881 to the present day* (1996), <https://www.ons.gov.uk/> (accessed 05/07/2019).

The 'achievement' of full employment, considered so central to the classic welfare state, was therefore not extended to the severely disabled, either in terms of Remploy specifically, nor in terms of sheltered employment generally. Fulfilling the requirements to be eligible under the DPEA for sheltered employment was no guarantee of a place either in a Remploy factory or any of the alternatives. Remploy itself did not therefore provide employment to all those eligible, instead selecting only

<sup>47</sup> The Government Statistical Service, *Unemployment statistics from 1881 to the present day* (1996), <https://www.ons.gov.uk/> (accessed 05/07/2019).

a limited number. This chapter will now address this question of who was selected for Remploy and the basis upon which this occurred.

### The Ex-Service Personnel View

An enduring view regarding Remploy is that it was designed primarily for employing ex-service personnel who then formed its workforce.<sup>48</sup> As was indicated in Chapter Two, part of Bevin's role in the formation of the DPEA was in insisting that the measures contained in the Act were not to be limited to disabled ex-service personnel, but were to be available to all disabled people of working age, regardless of the origin of their disability. The DPEA did not therefore limit Remploy to providing for those disabled during the war exclusively. What was included in the Act, however, despite Bevin's objections, was a clause granting preference to ex-service personnel. Clause 16 of the DPEA stated that if the measures could not 'for the time being be provided for all persons in need of them', then preference would be given to ex-service men and women.<sup>49</sup> This meant that where demand for places in a Remploy factory outpaced those available, ex-service personnel should, in line with this principal, have been given priority.

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<sup>48</sup> 'Who we are', *Remploy* (2017),

[http://www.remploy.co.uk/info/20124/find\\_out\\_more/72/who\\_we\\_are](http://www.remploy.co.uk/info/20124/find_out_more/72/who_we_are) (accessed 27/06/2017).

'Remploy's Journey', *Remploy* (2017)

[http://www.remploy.co.uk/downloads/file/141/remloys\\_journeypdf](http://www.remploy.co.uk/downloads/file/141/remloys_journeypdf) (accessed 27/06/2017).

Fox, 'What are Remploy workers doing now?', *BBC News* (31.11.2014),

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-29843567> (accessed 27/06/2017); Beattie, 'Hundreds of axed disabled

workers still jobless TWO years after Remploy factory closures', *Mirror* (05.01.2015),

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/hundreds-axed-disabled-workers-still-4919835> (accessed

27/06/2017); 'Remploy's history as specialist disabled employer remembered as final factories close',

*ITV Report*, (31.10.2013), <http://www.itv.com/news/2013-10-31/final-remploy-factory-closes/>

(accessed 27/06/2017); Historic England, 'Disability History: Disability, Rehabilitation and Work'

(2017), <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/disability-history/1945-to-the-present-day/disability-rehabilitation-and-work/>

(accessed 11/08/2017). Anderson, 'Turned into

Taxpayers', pp. 469-70; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 211; Slorach, *A*

*Very Capitalist Condition*, p. 141.

<sup>49</sup> DPEA.

A preference for the recruitment of ex-service personnel does seem to have been the initial intention of Remploy's senior management in the early development of the company. As well as reflecting the terms of the DPEA, such a focus is perhaps unsurprising at the close of the war and in the early stages of demobilisation. In his first report as Executive Director of Remploy, Air Commodore Venn noted that at the initial meeting of the MOL Regional Controllers, to discuss how to set up the scheme in July 1945, 'it was explained to the Controllers that the Corporation was impatient for the completion of the register and were particularly anxious about the disabled ex-Servicemen's employment'.<sup>50</sup> This emphasis continued in further reports of Venn's fact-finding visits to various sheltered workshops and training schemes, as well as in discussions with representatives of the War Office and Air Ministry.<sup>51</sup> The preference was also noted in the company guidelines for the setting up of a Remploy factory in 1946, in initial meetings with the Regional Executive Officers of Remploy, and in the official MOL guidance for local employment officers.<sup>52</sup> As Remploy factories began to operate however, this sentiment soon vanished from the records of recruitment, with no further mention of preference for those disabled as a result of war or any other cause throughout the remainder of the period considered in this thesis. There is also evidence that even from the earliest stages the reality of recruitment differed from the expressed wish to prioritise ex-service personnel. In an interview panel for the first Remploy factory at Bridgend in May 1946, which Venn himself attended and reported

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<sup>50</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director Report No. 1' (23.07.1945).

<sup>51</sup> See Executive Director reports in TNA LAB 20/187, for example, 'Executive Director Report No. 4'; 'Executive Director Report No. 5'.

<sup>52</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director Report No. 8, Appendix "G", Notes by Executive Director on the Setting Up of a British Factory' (18.03.1946); TNA LAB 20/253, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Regional Executive Officers' Conference' (19.11.1946); TNA LAB 20/201, MOL, 'Employment with the Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, M.L.Circ. 139/166' (24.07.1946).

upon, it was apparent that men were not selected simply based upon them being ex-service.<sup>53</sup>

A complete breakdown of the numbers of ex-service personnel in Remploy for the period considered here is no longer extant, but what evidence there is clearly demonstrates that the Remploy workforce was not solely composed of this group. There are only occasional instances in the reports of Remploy's Executive and Managing Directors in the 1950s in which the percentage of ex-servicemen is revealed and sparse mentions elsewhere, but it is possible to gain a sense of the numbers employed. By 1951, when Remploy was nearing the end of its period of expansion, the number of ex-service personnel was indicated in the report of the Executive Director for the first time. This report revealed that of the then 5,224 'severely disabled' employees in Remploy, 2,242 were ex-servicemen, some forty-three per cent,<sup>54</sup> It has not proved possible to discover the numbers of ex-service personnel in Remploy as a whole prior to this. There was, however, a localised example given in the Commons in June 1948, with the Minister of Labour, George Isaacs, revealing that in the two Remploy factories in West Yorkshire (Halifax and Pontefract), of the fifty-five workers, twenty-five were ex-service personnel, representing forty-five per cent of the workforce, which likely reflected a similar overall proportion.<sup>55</sup> In 1952, Venn mentioned in a report that the percentage of disabled ex-servicemen employed had reduced to forty-two per cent.<sup>56</sup> According to

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<sup>53</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director Report No. 10' (20.05.1946); 'Executive Director Report No. 10: Appendix "D"' (20.05.1946); 'Executive Director Report No. 11: Appendix "F"' (18.06.1946).

<sup>54</sup> TNA LAB 20/43, Remploy Limited, 'Executive Director Report No. 60' (21.03.1951).

<sup>55</sup> TNA LAB 20/444, 'Mr Isaacs Hansard Extract' (08.06.1948).

<sup>56</sup> TNA BM 8/13, Remploy Limited, 'Executive Director Report No. 72' (24.04.1952).

figures presented in *Remploy News*, the following year this had once again grown to forty-three per cent.<sup>57</sup>

A breakdown by gender began to appear in the Managing Director reports in 1955, one of which noted that at the end of 1954 the 'percentage of Ex-Servicemen is 44.2%', while 'the percentage of Ex-Servicewomen is 1.4%'.<sup>58</sup> By the start of 1956 this had increased slightly, with the report noting that the 'percentage of Ex-Servicemen is 44.6%' and 'the percentage of Ex-Servicewomen is 1.7%'.<sup>59</sup> This appears to represent a peak, as by 1958 the percentage was estimated at 'about 40 per cent'.<sup>60</sup> By 1960 this had dropped to thirty-five per cent.<sup>61</sup> At the end of the period, 1979, the percentage of ex-servicemen was down again to 27.4 % and the percentage of ex-servicewomen was 1.4%.<sup>62</sup> The difference between the numbers of men and women in these examples is a striking feature and this issue will be considered in greater detail in Chapter Five which examines the place of women in Remploy. The central point here is that it is clear that, contrary to the popular notion, Remploy was not solely, nor primarily, employing ex-service personnel at any point. As a result, many ex-service personnel remained on the register of Section II disabled unemployed. In September 1952, for example, when Remploy was employing over 5,500 workers, of whom forty-two per cent were ex-service personnel, there remained 2,774 ex-service personnel registered as Section II who were unemployed.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> *Remploy News*, 3 (February, 1953).

<sup>58</sup> TNA BM 8/23, Remploy Limited, 'Managing Director's Report No. 30, Appendix I' (16.03.1955).

<sup>59</sup> TNA BM 8/18, Remploy Limited, 'Executive Director Report No. 116, Appendix H' (11.04.1956).

<sup>60</sup> TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, 'Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain' (February, 1958), p. 8.

<sup>61</sup> Mr. P. Thomas, *Hansard* (16.03.1960), vol. 619 cc.104-5W.

<sup>62</sup> TNA BM 3/67, Remploy Limited, 'Report on Employment of Disabled People in Remploy - 1979, Appendix 6'.

<sup>63</sup> TNA LAB 20/591, MOL, 'Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, Number of Unemployed Registered Disabled Persons' (October, 1952). For Remploy numbers see TNA BM 3/67, 'Appendix 2'.

It is clear therefore that ex-service personnel, more specifically ex-servicemen, represented only a significant minority in Remploy. The initial preference enshrined in the DPEA appears to have been accepted initially in theory, but in practice to quite rapidly have tapered off. Preference for ex-service personnel simply ceased to be mentioned in any of the records examined on recruitment and the workforce and they ceased to feature as a distinct group within Remploy's many reports on its personnel. This has important implications for the historiography of disability and the welfare state. Historians such as Anderson, Hampton and Borsay have suggested that disabled ex-servicemen continued to maintain a privileged position in post-war period, with greater success in returning to their previous jobs, of finding employment generally, of claiming more generous benefit payments in the form of war pensions, and in benefiting from a political profile and as the focus of many charitable efforts.<sup>64</sup> However, we can see that in the case of Remploy, this privileged position of disabled ex-servicemen had ceased to be universal. Entry into Remploy was open to civilians and ex-service personnel alike, on a basis other than military service. Civilian status was in itself no barrier to entry into Remploy, and ex-service status was no guarantee. This chapter will build upon this analysis to explore the actual basis upon which employees were selected for Remploy.

#### Selection for Entry to Remploy: Factory Access

In considering the process by which selection for Remploy took place it is necessary to consider both central policy and how this was implemented at the local factory

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<sup>64</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 187-9, 211; Elsey, 'The Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the Two World Wars', pp. 292-7; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 99, 199-209; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, pp. 160-2; Millward, 'Social Security Policy and the Early Disability Movement', p. 281; Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, p. 258.

level. Before doing this, it is also important to consider a more practical limitation as one way in which this selection occurred was based on the practicalities of having physical access to a Remploy factory. Not everyone who registered and was deemed Section II lived within an acceptable commuting distance of a Remploy factory. The exclusion of disabled people from employment due to location and the limitations of available transport has been noted as a persistent problem by scholars such as Brendan Gleeson.<sup>65</sup> In the case of Remploy, each factory had a 'catchment area', but there were not enough factories to create a full national coverage. In 1952 the Remploy Chairman, Sir Robert Burrows, noted the impracticality of providing a factory for everyone eligible, remarking that 'you cannot put factories in a lot of inaccessible places where there are disabled people'.<sup>66</sup>

What Remploy factories there were, were specifically situated in order for employees in the local area to 'make a daily journey to and from work to their homes using public transport'.<sup>67</sup> As geographers considering disability have noted however, urban infrastructure including public transport can prove extremely problematic for disabled people in a number of ways owing to an underlying assumption that 'passengers are non-impaired'.<sup>68</sup> Remploy does appear to have been aware of potential difficulties and been keen to ensure that problems commuting should not prevent workers accessing their local factory with the provision of special transport 'to supplement an inadequate service'.<sup>69</sup> In one case this involved a factory deciding to purchase a lorry which

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<sup>65</sup> Gleeson, *Geographies of Disability*, p.132.

<sup>66</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), para. 287, p. 21, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017).

<sup>67</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 37. See also TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, 'Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain' (February, 1958), p. 10.

<sup>68</sup> Gleeson, *Geographies of Disability*, pp. 137-40.

<sup>69</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 37.

could serve as a commercial vehicle and also be modified as needed to serve as a company bus for workers.<sup>70</sup> As well as such local initiatives Rempjoy's central policy was to provide travelling expenses to all employees where the cost 'exceeded 6d.' a day for workers to attend a factory.<sup>71</sup>

Whilst there would indeed be a number of people whose location left them effectively excluded from Rempjoy, this still left a significant number within the 'catchment area' of a factory who were not employed. Sir Robert suggested in 1952 that this was then 'no more than 2,000' people.<sup>72</sup> In 1956 calculations were done which showed that there were 2,660 unemployed Section II people nationwide who were within a suitable distance of a Rempjoy factory, and by 1959 this had increased to nearly 3,000.<sup>73</sup> By the end of the period it was suggested by Rempjoy that approximately two-thirds of registered unemployed Section II people, some 6,000, were living within a factory catchment area.<sup>74</sup> There were understandably large regional differences in these numbers. In 1960, for example, the North Western Region was reported to have 546 unemployed Section II people within factory catchment areas, compared to thirty-three people outside them; whilst the Eastern and Southern Region had 164 unemployed Section II people within catchment areas and 204 outside.<sup>75</sup> Similarly at the end of the period considered in this thesis, it was calculated that ninety-nine per

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<sup>70</sup> TNA LAB 20/444, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Rempjoy Factory, Barking: Transport facilities for disabled employees' (21.12.1948).

<sup>71</sup> This was up to a maximum of 10s. a week, TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, 'Rempjoy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain' (February, 1958), p. 10; TNA BM 10/1, Rempjoy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 37.

<sup>72</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), para. 287, p. 21, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017).

<sup>73</sup> TNA LAB 43/268, 'Note on Letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> May, 1956 from Mr. F.G. Willey'; TNA LAB 20/1052, NACED, 'Analysis of the Severely Disabled Unemployed' (February, 1960); NACED, 'Analysis of the Severely Disabled Unemployed: Appendix IV, Regional Analysis of Section II Unemployed' (February, 1960).

<sup>74</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Rempjoy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success' (July, 1980), p. 20.

<sup>75</sup> TNA LAB 20/1052, NACED, 'Analysis of the Severely Disabled Unemployed: Appendix IV, Regional Analysis of Section II Unemployed' (February, 1960).



cent of the unemployed Section II in the North West region lived within a catchment area, compared to thirty-seven per cent in the South West.<sup>76</sup> While there were therefore a number of people for whom no local factory could provide employment, and who were therefore beyond the reach of the scheme, there remained a significant number of registered Section II employees within the catchment area of a Rempoy factory who were not selected to work in one.

#### Selection for Entry to Rempoy: Central Recruitment Policy

Recruitment into a Rempoy factory was administered at the local level, but there are some important developments in Rempoy's central policy to be considered. Chapter Three has already demonstrated the importance of maximising commercial efficiency in Rempoy, and it will be examined here how this was reflected in terms of selecting employees. There appears to have been concern among Rempoy's senior management over the productivity of the workforce from the beginning. In his initial assessment of those designated as Section II, the Rempoy Executive Director, Venn, lamented that the majority were old, and having not worked before had 'deteriorated to such an extent as to be virtually unemployable'.<sup>77</sup> However, in the first few years of its existence, prior to the slow-down policy described in Chapter Three which would come in the late 1940s, there remained an assumption that Rempoy would have to eventually cater for all those on the Section II register.<sup>78</sup> The question of productivity was therefore raised at this point in terms of giving preference to the most capable candidates. Rempoy's central policy was therefore that recruitment should focus on getting those who were most capable into 'useful employment' and thereby establish a

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<sup>76</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Rempoy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success' (July, 1980), p. 20.

<sup>77</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director Report No. 1' (23.07.1945).

<sup>78</sup> TNA LAB 20/253, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Regional Representatives Conference No. 2' (18.12.1945).

productive atmosphere into a factory, and once this was done gradually introduce those considered less productive.<sup>79</sup> There was no question at this stage of permanently excluding those considered less productive, but there was a clear policy of establishing productive factory environments prior to the introduction of large numbers of such cases.<sup>80</sup>

This policy did not last long. By 1951, alongside the focus on improving Remploy's commercial performance, and following investigations of the Section II register involving the NACED, the MOL and Remploy, the attitude began to develop that not all those on the Section II register were in practice 'suitable' for Remploy.<sup>81</sup> This 'suitability' was based on an assessment of a person's potential productivity. The Remploy Board agreed that it was reasonable that entry to a Remploy factory should be subject to a candidate's ability 'to attain a minimum percentage of a fit person's output in a similar job'.<sup>82</sup> This was justified both in terms of maintaining production and because it had been observed that the presence of those unable to be productive in a factory 'tends to dishearten the more productive people'.<sup>83</sup> When giving evidence to the Select Committee on Estimates in 1952, the then Chairman, Sir Robert, expressed this now orthodox position, noting that there effectively existed a third category of disability, beyond those deemed Section I and Section II in which 'there is a degree of

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<sup>79</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director Report No. 1' (23.07.1945).

<sup>80</sup> TNA LAB 20/444, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director Circular 7A/1' (06.10.1948); TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), pp. 39-40.

<sup>81</sup> TNA LAB 20/1052, NACED, 'Analysis of the Severely Disabled Unemployed'; SEC, 'Unemployed Severely Disabled Persons, S.E.C.39'; TNA LAB 20/591, MOL, 'Quarterly Bulletin No. 12: Part 1 – National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled Meeting' (June, 1951).

<sup>82</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Fifty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors' (27.09.1950).

<sup>83</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Sixty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors' (26.02.1951).

incapacity which makes it really impossible to take a man into a factory'.<sup>84</sup> He explained that Remploy was currently being selective in its recruitment, noting that 'if we do not want a man we do not take him'.<sup>85</sup> This position was endorsed by a MOL representative also providing evidence to the Committee, who concurred that 'Remploy are not bound to take everybody'.<sup>86</sup> It is not clear what precise standard was set on applicants but the Executive Director did note that the company did not normally accept an applicant who 'cannot in the first place work a minimum of 30 hours, and there must be prospects, with rehabilitation, of longer hours being worked'.<sup>87</sup> At no point therefore did Remploy simply recruit those designated as eligible under the DPEA without some selection, with productivity as the key measure. While the DPEA recognised only two categories, both the Remploy Board and the MOL were united in modifying this legislation in practice and informally creating a further category of disability below the acceptable productivity capacity for Remploy.

The establishment of a minimum level of productivity by Remploy continued to be endorsed by the MOL during the Conservative governments of the 1950s, in which the subject of avoiding the recruitment of those designated 'Low Production Potentials' was regularly discussed.<sup>88</sup> The Conservative Minister of Labour, Iain MacLeod, who had personal experience of disability, with both himself and his wife

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<sup>84</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), para. 203, pp. 16-7, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017).

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, paras. 204-5.

<sup>87</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 38.

<sup>88</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors' (13.07.1955); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Eleventh Meeting of the Board of Directors' (27.07.1955); TNA LAB 20/929, 'Record of Meeting' (20.07.1955); 'Note from St. John Wilson' (18.10.1955); 'Notes for Minister (to be read in conjunction with the letter of 3<sup>rd</sup> November to Sir Brunel Cohen)' (03.11.1955); 'Note from Sir Brunel Cohen to Iain MacLeod, D.P.2747/1955' (19.01.1956); 'Note from Mr. Iain MacLeod to Sir Brunel Cohen, D.P.2747/1955' (22.02.1956).

suffering from a range of health conditions, summed up the prevailing attitude in 1956, stating that ‘it would be a false kindness, and certainly very costly, to take on or retain those who are unable, and sometimes perhaps unwilling, to make any significant contribution to production’.<sup>89</sup> This view was also endorsed in the conclusion of two reports. In 1955, the report on Remploy by the Organisation and Methods Division of the Treasury highlighted the need for the company to employ more productive employees if it was to improve its commercial efficiency.<sup>90</sup> The following year saw the publication of the influential Piercy Report, which clarified the idea of sheltered workshops as being ‘places of employment with as high as possible a rate of individual productivity’.<sup>91</sup> Sheltered employment was thus to be for ‘those who are willing to undertake the work provided and able to make a significant contribution to production’.<sup>92</sup> This notion of an ability to make ‘a significant contribution to production’ was to remain the guiding principle of recruitment policy for the remainder of the period considered in this thesis.<sup>93</sup>

With the principle of productivity established, this left the question of how to determine what benchmark qualified as a ‘significant contribution’. This appears to

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<sup>89</sup> TNA LAB 20/929, ‘Note from Mr. Iain MacLeod to Sir Brunel Cohen, D.P.2747/1955’ (22.02.1956); ‘Sir Brunel Cohen’s Notes, D.P.2747/55’ (09.11.1955). Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 52; D. Goldsworthy, ‘MacLeod, Iain Norman (1913–1970), politician’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (06.01.2011), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-34788> (accessed 15/10/2017).

<sup>90</sup> TNA BM 8/6, Remploy Limited, ‘Summary of Principal Comments & Recommendations made by O. & M. Division – H.M. Treasury and Interim Replies by the Directors’ (June, 1955); TNA LAB 20/929, ‘Note from Sir W. Monckton to Sir Brunel Cohen, D.P.2747/1955’ (16.12.1955).

<sup>91</sup> *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on The Rehabilitation Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 9883 (1956), p. 94, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 21/07/2017).

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> TNA LAB 20/1052, SEC, ‘Analysis of the Severely Disabled Unemployed, S.E.C. 87’ (February, 1960). The Stewart Working Party on Workshops for the Blind, set up in 1960, followed the ideas of the Piercy Report when it reported in 1962 that they should employ those ‘capable of doing work of substantial economic value’, TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), para. 2.25, p 12. Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 55-8.

have remained completely ambiguous until it was finally quantified in the 1970s. The Consultative Document produced by the DE under the Heath government in 1973 on ‘Sheltered Employment for Disabled People’, which sought to consider how sheltered employment had developed since the Second World War and how to promote better provision, noted the previous lack of a clear benchmark in this area. The Consultative Document suggested that a reasonable minimum productivity standard would be ‘not less than one third of the output of a fit but otherwise comparable person performing similar work in ordinary industry’.<sup>94</sup> Though it is not clear when this was officially adopted by Remploy, and there is no record of it being discussed at Board level, in early 1975 the Personnel Director noted that the official central recruitment policy of the company was indeed a ‘minimum standard on entry of one-third of that of an able-bodied person (usually interpreted as a “20 minute hour”)’.<sup>95</sup> This was to remain the official policy well into the 1980s.<sup>96</sup>

This policy was not without opposition, however, both from within the company and without.<sup>97</sup> The DE noted that the biggest single criticism it received was that the entry standard to Remploy was too high.<sup>98</sup> Conversely, there were regular complaints from Remploy that it was increasingly difficult to find candidates who could reach this benchmark. In 1966 Remploy estimated that one third of those candidates put forward

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<sup>94</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), para. 4.58, pp. 57-9.

<sup>95</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, ‘Personnel Director to Managing Director: Section II Employees – Entry Standards’ (10.02.1975).

<sup>96</sup> TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, ‘Remploy in the Long Term’ (22.04.1977), para. 2.2, p. 1; TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, ‘Objectives and Criteria of Success’ (July, 1980), p. 8; TNA BM 10/53, Remploy Limited, ‘Remploy Facts’ (September, 1986), p. 9.

<sup>97</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, ‘Objectives and Criteria of Success’ (July, 1980), p. 27.

<sup>98</sup> TNA BM 8/79, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (15.01.1975).

for work in a factory were 'unsuitable'.<sup>99</sup> By 1971 this had increased to forty per cent.<sup>100</sup> Throughout the 1970s, Remply's Board frequently commented on the lack of suitable candidates, suggesting that only 'one in every 2 or 3 persons' on the Section II register were employable.<sup>101</sup> Once again the Board was aligned in its view with the DE, which agreed that within the Section II category, up to two-thirds were unsuitable for Remply.<sup>102</sup> A minimum level of productivity was therefore established in Remply central policy as necessary for entry to a factory. This was supported by the MOL and then DE under successive governments and became entrenched in the wider understanding of what sheltered employment should provide. This policy endorsed the selection of candidates for Remply based on their ability to meet a productivity benchmark and thereby excluded those registered Section II people who could not.

#### Selection for Entry to Remply: Local Recruitment Reality

While there was development of a central policy for recruitment, the process itself was carried out entirely at a local level with each Remply factory recruiting its own workforce from the limited local candidate pool. In each case the perceived quality of applicants could vary widely, as could the number available.<sup>103</sup> An analysis done by the MOL in south London and Derby in 1949 and 1950 respectively, provides a useful example of the kind of variability in available labour. In south London, out of 225

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<sup>99</sup> TNA BM 8/3, Remply Limited, 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Thirty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (17.11.1966).

<sup>100</sup> Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 55.

<sup>101</sup> TNA BM 8/79, Remply Limited, 'Minutes of the Three Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (20.03.1975). See further references to this in Board Meeting Minutes for October 1971, November 1971, September 1973, May 1974, September 1974, October 1974, in TNA BM 8/49; January 1976, March 1978, in TNA BM 8/79. See also TNA BM 10/48, Remply Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success' (July, 1980), p. 20.

<sup>102</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), para. 4.61, p 60.

<sup>103</sup> TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, 'Sheltered Employment Committee S.E.C.14, Appendix II' (September, 1946); TNA LAB 20/929, Remply Limited, 'Note from Sir Brunel Cohen to Minister of Labour' (27.03.1956).

unemployed Section II personnel, only thirty-three were classified as 'suitable for Remploy', whereas in Derby, out of 229 unemployed Section II personnel, seventy-six were considered suitable, more than double.<sup>104</sup>

The general process of recruitment remained largely unchanged throughout the period examined in this thesis.<sup>105</sup> When vacancies arose in a Remploy factory, the designated local employment office was alerted. The DRO attached to that office then submitted potential applicants for an interview which was held at the factory by a panel consisting of the factory manager, factory doctor and the DRO. The DRO was present in an advisory capacity only. The final decision whether to accept or refuse an applicant rested with the factory manager, with the doctor providing a further medical assessment of an applicant's suitability for the factory. It was this localised panel which ultimately provided access to a Remploy Factory.

Chapter Three has already demonstrated that individual factories could work very differently and that there was often a wide gulf between official Remploy policy and the realities at the local level. Nowhere was this more the case than in terms of recruitment. One Remploy Area Liaison Officer (ALO) – the level of management above factory manager – noted the disconnect between central recruitment policy and the reality at the local level, explaining that in terms of recruitment, central policy was

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<sup>104</sup> TNA LAB 20/1052, SEC, 'Unemployed Severely Disabled Persons, S.E.C.39'; SEC, 'Analysis of the Severely Disabled Unemployed'.

<sup>105</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation, 'Executive Director Report No. 8, Appendix G: Notes by Executive Director on the setting up of a British Factory' (18.03.1946); Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director Report No. 10' (20.05.1946); TNA LAB 20/201, MOL, 'Circular 139/166: Employment with the Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited' (24.07.1946). Mr. Isaacs, *Hansard* (23.03.1949), vol. 463 cc.39-40w. TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 39; TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, 'Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain' (February, 1958), p. 9. The process was largely unchanged at least into the 1980s, TNA BM 10/53, Remploy Limited, 'Remploy Facts' (September, 1986), p. 9.

‘applied at local level at so many variances that the original decision bears no resemblance to the factual situation eventually arrived at’.<sup>106</sup> This was also something noted by the DE in the Consultative Document.<sup>107</sup> There were thus further local factors which served to define who was ‘suitable’ for Remploy and thereby further restrict access. The key areas examined here are the local variations in entry standards, methods of assessments, and a further focus on productivity.

The local nature of recruitment meant that the standard against which factory managers assessed applicants was not uniform and instead reflected the realities of the local situation and the production needs of the individual factory. Initially, Remploy’s central policy was that local factory conditions were not to be given paramount importance when recruiting workers. Given the kinds of disparate work which factories undertook in the early period outlined in Chapter Three, this is perhaps unsurprising. Noting that factories were attempting to limit recruitment based upon finding the right candidates for specific jobs then being undertaken, the Executive Director issued a circular in 1948 instructing factories not to do this, explaining instead that ‘if suitable work does not exist in the factory, it is to be found’.<sup>108</sup> He noted that ‘this will often give Managers considerable trouble’, but emphasised that this could not restrict recruitment.<sup>109</sup> As such, factory managers were encouraged to introduce additional work if required to suit the employees available ‘even though that work may consist of chopping firewood, making clothes pegs or some other similar

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<sup>106</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, ‘Newcastle upon Tyne Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standards for into Remploy Limited’ (03.02.1975); ‘Note from Managing Director, Disabled People: Entry Standard for Employment in Remploy Ltd’ (22.01.1975).

<sup>107</sup> TNA 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), p.71.

<sup>108</sup> TNA LAB 20/444, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director Circular 7A/1’ (06.10.1948).

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.



job'.<sup>110</sup> With the emphasis shifting to commercial strength and with factory lines becoming standardised with specific production processes, this soon changed.<sup>111</sup> By 1952 the Remploy chairman reported that candidates for Remploy were being assessed based on their ability to perform in the particular trade of a given factory.<sup>112</sup> This point was made again in 1956 following discussion of Remploy by members of the Parliamentary Labour Party, then in opposition. In response to questions raised by the Labour MPs, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour, Robert Carr, who would later serve in the Heath administration as Secretary of State for Employment and then Home Secretary, explained that recruitment standards and practices varied in Remploy according to the type of work carried out in particular factories.<sup>113</sup> With this policy then set, candidates for Remploy would have to meet the specific standards of their particular local factory, which could vary widely.

This variation was brought into focus most keenly with the investigation of Remploy factory entry standards instigated by the Managing Director in 1975 in response to the DE questioning the process in the Consultative Document. The Managing Director admitted that setting down a comprehensive entry standard was 'extremely hard to do' as though the central policy standard was the '20 minute hour', he assumed that in reality it varied widely across the network of factories.<sup>114</sup> The responses provided to

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<sup>110</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 40.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>112</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), para. 189, p. 15, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017).

<sup>113</sup> TNA LAB 43/268, 'Note from Mr Robert Carr to Mr. Willey' (19.07.1956). M. Garnett, 'Carr, (Leonard) Robert, Baron Carr of Hadley (1916–2012), politician and businessman', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (07.01.2016), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-104651> (accessed 24/07/2019).

<sup>114</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, 'Note from Managing Director, Disabled People: Entry Standard for Employment in Remploy Ltd' (22.01.1975).

the Managing Director from the various Directors and ALOs asked to discover the reality of the situation, indicate the continued emphasis of recruiting based on the needs of the particular factory, and the wide range of standards which this entailed.<sup>115</sup> The Personnel Director emphasised this and the ‘large element of luck’ involved in a candidate gaining entry to Remploi as their perceived ability matched the requirements of the particular factory.<sup>116</sup> He concluded that recruitment standards ‘vary quite a lot from factory to factory and more particularly from trade to trade’.<sup>117</sup> Variations across the different Remploi trade groups were mentioned in more detail by the ALO for Cardiff, who suggested that in general woodworking factories ‘demand the highest standard of fitness’, and orthopaedic factories ‘demand more intelligence’, with packaging factories accepting a ‘much lower standard’ of both.<sup>118</sup> The Cardiff ALO also hinted at how the variation could work the other way, with applicants not liking the particular work available at their local factory.<sup>119</sup> This situation continued throughout the period considered in this thesis and beyond, with recruitment assessment continuing to be based in practice on the specific needs of each factory rather than on any central uniform standard.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> See TNA BM 3/47 for all responses – for example, TNA BM 3/47, Remploi Limited, ‘Note from Secretary and Director, Disabled People: Entry Standard for Employment in Remploi Ltd’ (28.01.1975); ‘Personnel Director to Managing Director: Section II Employees – Entry Standards’ (10.02.1975); ‘Cardiff Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standards for Employment in Remploi’ (28.01.1975); ‘Brixton Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Entry Standards for Disabled People’ (29.01.1975); ‘Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment in Remploi Ltd’ (27.01.1975); ‘Scottish Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Entry Standard for Disabled People in Remploi’ (03.02.1975); ‘Pontefract Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment at Remploi Limited’ (2.01.1975); ‘Newcastle upon Tyne Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standards for into Remploi Limited’ (03.02.1975); ‘L.&T.P. Director to Managing Director, Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment in Remploi Ltd’ (11.02.1975).

<sup>116</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploi Limited, ‘Personnel Director to Managing Director: Section II Employees – Entry Standards’ (10.02.1975).

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploi Limited, ‘Cardiff Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standards for Employment in Remploi’ (28.01.1975).

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remploi Limited, ‘Objectives and Criteria of Success, Appendix 9: M.I.R. Department Circular No: 1758, Section 2 Entry Standards’ (20.02.1979); TNA BM 10/53, Remploi Limited, ‘Remploi Facts’ (September, 1986), p. 9.

Further variations occurred in how candidates were assessed by the factory panel. Unfortunately there are no complete records of interviews and assessment of candidates retained in the archives. There are, however, occasional glimpses in the records of the criteria by which candidates were assessed for a place in a Remploy factory. This assessment began with the DRO selecting the candidate for the interview. In a study of the Section II register in the South London region in 1950, it was noted that DROs examined the medical and industrial records of each person and then classified them as either 'suitable', 'unsuitable', or 'possibly suitable' for their local Remploy factory.<sup>121</sup> The factors which were considered were the attitude to work, the employment record, the nature of the disability, travelling difficulties, and age.<sup>122</sup> A report on the Section II register for Huddersfield in 1973 assessed candidates on similar lines.<sup>123</sup>

The DRO's impression of the candidate's attitude towards work appears to have been the key focus for their own assessment. Some specific examples of this appeared in a report for the MOL on the Section II register undertaken in 1956, which included extracts from DRO reports.<sup>124</sup> In one example given, a candidate was described thus: 'he has not worked since March 1948 and he has adapted himself to a life of idleness. The will to work is obviously missing'.<sup>125</sup> In some cases this appears to have reflected a belief that the candidate did not really want employment but wished instead to

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<sup>121</sup> TNA LAB 20/1052, SEC, 'Unemployed Severely Disabled Persons, S.E.C.39'.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.; TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), p. 33.

<sup>123</sup> TNA BM 8/50, Remploy Limited, 'Note from Personnel Director: Huddersfield Factory' (03.04.1973).

<sup>124</sup> TNA LAB 20/1052, SEC, 'Examination of a Sample of 242 Register Disabled Persons classified as unlikely to obtain employment except under sheltered conditions, S.E.C.61' (November, 1956).

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

continue to rely on benefit payments. In one such case the DRO remarked of a candidate that ‘with his present allowances of £5 3s. 6d. per week from the National Assistance Board he appears to be quite content’.<sup>126</sup> Similarly of another candidate, a man aged sixty-one, the DRO stated that ‘there is in my opinion no incentive for this man, who is very badly disabled, to take employment, and I have little doubt that he has in effect retired, and will continue to draw N.A. [National Assistance] Grant until he is 65 years of age’.<sup>127</sup> Given that it was this subjective opinion on something as intangible as an impression of a candidate’s ‘will to work’ which was the key factor in determining entry, it is unsurprising that, as with the initial categorisation as Section II, the further categorisation of ‘suitable for Remploy’ was widely variable.

The role of the doctor on the interview panel was to provide a medical assessment of the candidate’s ability to undertake the kind of work done in the factory to the required standard.<sup>128</sup> Again there are no surviving records of such assessment. There are, however, instances from the 1975 investigation of entry standards in which ALOs commented on the reliance on the doctor’s judgement as to the candidate’s physical and mental abilities to carry out the role available.<sup>129</sup> With both the DRO and doctor providing advice only, the final decision as to whether to employ a candidate fell to the factory manager. The chief interest of the manager appears to have been, as with the DRO, determining the candidate’s ‘will to work’.<sup>130</sup> An example of how the ‘will

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> TNA LAB 20/444, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director Circular 7A/1’ (06.10.1948); TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, ‘A Review of the Company during its first seven years’ (March, 1953), p. 38.

<sup>129</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, ‘Cardiff Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standards for Employment in Remploy’ (28.01.1975); Remploy Limited, ‘L.&T.P. Director to Managing Director, Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment in Remploy Ltd’ (11.02.1975); TNA BM 10/53, Remploy Ltd, ‘Remploy Facts’ (September, 1986), p. 9.

<sup>130</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, ‘Personnel Director to Managing Director: Section II Employees – Entry Standards’ (10.02.1975); Remploy Limited, ‘Cardiff Area Liaison Officer to Personnel

to work' was ascertained, was provided in a response to the 1975 investigation by the Cardiff ALO, who noted how he himself did so on occasions where he joined the interview panel:

When I attend interview panels I invariable ask the applicant, 'Do you want to work in this factory?'. A sideways glance at the DRO used to indicate 'No', because the applicant would be afraid of saying 'No' in case his Dole money was reduced. Today, applicants are more honest and usually give a positive 'Yes' or 'No'. This question can eliminate 5-10% of applicants. If I am still doubtful about the 'will to work', I ask, 'can you arrive at this factory by 7:30 a.m. every morning and work for 8 hours?' (4 factories in my area start at 7:30am). If the applicant has ascertained bus times you can be sure he is keen. At my last panel in Lydney one applicant said 'I always feel sick travelling on a bus'. We have the bronchitic who says 'I am no good until 10 o'clock in the morning'.<sup>131</sup>

As with the determination of the 'will to work' by the DRO, this was a purely subjective measure with no set process or standard, with the clear potential for wide variation across the factory network from manager to manager. Furthermore, it is apparent that there were also variations in terms of the interview format itself. Some factory managers made use of aptitude tests in interviews which others did not.<sup>132</sup> Some factory managers also apparently included the foreman of the section with a vacancy at the interview to give his opinion, and occasionally factory managers invited potential candidates to see the factory prior to making a selection.<sup>133</sup>

It was recognised that this local recruitment process was inherently flawed. The Piercy Report in 1956 noted that the interview process could not accurately reveal the

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Director: Disabled People Entry Standards for Employment in Remploy' (28.01.1975); Remploy Limited, 'Brixton Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Entry Standards for Disabled People' (29.01.1975); TNA BM 10/53, Remploy Ltd, 'Remploy Facts' (September, 1986), p. 9.

<sup>131</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, 'Cardiff Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standards for Employment in Remploy' (28.01.1975).

<sup>132</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, 'Personnel Director to Managing Director: Section II Employees – Entry Standards' (10.02.1975).

<sup>133</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, 'Cardiff Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standards for Employment in Remploy' (28.01.1975).

true productivity potential of candidates.<sup>134</sup> This was highlighted later during the 1975 investigation by Remploy's Managing Director who suggested that factory managers did not always make a correct assessment of potential employees.<sup>135</sup> The Personnel Director agreed, noting that ultimately 'we do not know until a person is taken on, and tried out on a particular job or jobs, whether or not he can measure up to our minimum standard'.<sup>136</sup> This point was raised again at the end of the period in Remploy's internal report on the company's Objectives and Criteria of Success, which called for a better pre-employment assessment procedure as an urgent area of improvement.<sup>137</sup>

As was shown in Chapter Three, it is apparent that, in general, factory managers were primarily concerned with maximising the production efficiency of their factory. With the factory manager ultimately determining who was recruited into their factory, it is perhaps unsurprising that there were concerns raised about a focus on productivity beyond that endorsed by the Board, and beyond the standard set as central policy. The issue of factory managers tending to be over-selective in recruitment, in order to maximise productivity, was raised as an area of concern even prior to the push for commercial efficiency in the 1950s. The Remploy Executive Director was forced to clarify the recruitment policy in 1948 with a circular sent out to all factory managers.<sup>138</sup> Noting that the initial priority when opening a factory was to provide work for the most productive in order to establish an industrial tempo, he added that,

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<sup>134</sup> *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on The Rehabilitation Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 9883 (1956), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 21/07/2017).

<sup>135</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, 'Note from Secretary and Director, Disabled People: Entry Standard for Employment in Remploy Ltd' (28.01.1975).

<sup>136</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, 'Personnel Director to Managing Director: Section II Employees – Entry Standards' (10.02.1975).

<sup>137</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success' (July, 1980), p. 30.

<sup>138</sup> TNA LAB 20/444, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director Circular 7A/1' (06.10.1948).

‘as soon as possible after the initial stage, efforts must be made to take also the more severely disabled into employment’.<sup>139</sup> Apparently he had been made aware that ‘some Managers are reluctant to employ the more severely handicapped’, either due to the lack of suitable work available in the factory, or because of the effect on the factory production charts which were submitted to Head Office to monitor factory performance.<sup>140</sup> In this circular, the Executive Director emphasised that it was the role of the factory manager to provide some kind of work for everyone, and that production charts took second place to providing employment.<sup>141</sup> The circular did not solve the issue, with factory managers continuing to be selective and even employing those ‘who were not strictly in need of sheltered employment’, but who were considered good workers.<sup>142</sup>

Given the subsequent focus on commercial efficiency within Remploy, with factory managers put under increasing pressure to improve financial results, it is unsurprising that factory managers would choose to select only those capable of the highest productivity.<sup>143</sup> Even with the establishment of a minimum standard of production as policy, the issue remained throughout the period, with factory managers continually being seen as being selective beyond this and taking on only the most productive individuals.<sup>144</sup> Such criticism was levelled at Remploy from the Labour MP Mr. Caerwyn Roderick, who claimed that Remploy was being too selective in its

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, ‘A Review of the Company during its first seven years’ (March, 1953), p. 39.

<sup>143</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), para. 177, p. 14, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017).

<sup>144</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixty-Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (18.05.1960).

recruitment, placing production efficiency over employment.<sup>145</sup> He repeated this in January 1974, when he was assured by the Conservative Under-Secretary of State for Employment, Mr. Nicholas Scott, that ‘there is no pressure on Remploy to recruit less severely disabled personnel in order to reduce losses and increase efficiency’.<sup>146</sup> This statement does not seem to reflect the reality for factory managers themselves.

The responses to the investigation of entry standards in 1975 endorsed the view that many factory managers were being selective beyond the central policy benchmark in recruitment based on production needs.<sup>147</sup> One ALO noted that factory managers were ‘much more concerned with their factory costs than having satisfactorily employed a particularly severely disabled person’, and that ‘there are too many instances of managers wanting “fit” disabled people to help them achieve their production targets’.<sup>148</sup> Blame was not entirely placed on factory managers themselves, as the responses made clear that they felt they were simply responding to the real economic demands placed on them by Head Office and the performance measures which were based on productivity.<sup>149</sup> The Scottish ALO in particular was keen to stress the feeling that factory managers were under pressure from Head Office to prioritise production

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<sup>145</sup> Mr. Roderick, *Hansard* (01.05.1972), vol. 836, cc. 11-2.

<sup>146</sup> Mr. Roderick and Mr. Scott, *Hansard* (30.01.1974), vol. 868, cc. 126-7w.

<sup>147</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, ‘Note from Managing Director, Disabled People: Entry Standard for Employment in Remploy Ltd’ (22.01.1975); ‘L.&T.P. Director to Managing Director, Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment in Remploy Ltd’ (11.02.1975); ‘Cardiff Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standards for Employment in Remploy’ (28.01.1975); ‘Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment in Remploy Ltd’ (27.01.1975); ‘Scottish Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Entry Standard for Disabled People in Remploy’ (03.02.1975); ‘Pontefract Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment at Remploy Limited’ (28.01.1975); ‘Newcastle upon Tyne Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standards for into Remploy Limited’ (03.02.1975); ‘L.&T.P. Director to Managing Director, Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment in Remploy Ltd’ (11.02.1975).

<sup>148</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, ‘Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment in Remploy Ltd’ (27.01.1975).

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*; TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, ‘Pontefract Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment at Remploy Limited’ (28.01.1975).



needs.<sup>150</sup> This was also highlighted by the Newcastle-upon-Tyne ALO, who suggested that given Head Office's demand for production at the lowest possible costs the factory manager inevitably would only select 'what is in his opinion, the best of whom are panelled'.<sup>151</sup> Such remarks echoed the understood opinion of a number of factory managers themselves who had previously expressed that the company policy 'was heavily weighted on the production aspect'.<sup>152</sup> This issue appears to not have been solved, as the Hailey Report of 1980 noted that factory managers felt there was a disconnect between the policy espoused by the Board and MPs about Remploi's priority of providing employment, and the reality of their day-to-day dealings with Head Office. Factory performance was based entirely on measures of productivity with the inevitable result that factory managers felt they had no choice but 'to be selective when interviewing prospective employees'.<sup>153</sup> In reality therefore, with recruitment entirely performed at a local level, factory managers could be more selective than the minimum standard required by official policy. It is apparent that this was considered to be the common state of affairs, with managers only taking on those most productive for their factory in order to meet the productivity requirements they felt they were judged by.

Recruitment for Remploi, undertaken at the local level was therefore subject to wide variations and further selectivity. As such the central policy for recruitment bore little relation to the reality on the ground. Here instead a candidate was subject to the productivity needs of his or her local factory, the paternalistic and medical

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<sup>150</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploi Limited, 'Scottish Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Entry Standard for Disabled People in Remploi' (03.02.1975).

<sup>151</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploi Limited, 'Newcastle upon Tyne Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standards for into Remploi Limited' (03.02.1975).

<sup>152</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploi Limited, 'Report on a Mentally Disabled Teach-in' (05.12.1974).

<sup>153</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remploi Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success' (July, 1980), p. 62.

assessments of a panel of gatekeepers, and, finally, the whims and personality of a single factory manager. Entry to Remploy was therefore reserved for those candidates perceived to be able to make the maximum contribution to the factory's productivity. This meant that a great many severely disabled people, despite eligibility in terms of the DPEA, were excluded from gaining entry to Remploy. Having considered recruitment into Remploy, the next section will now consider the effect of this productivity imperative in terms of employee retention.

### Remaining in Remploy: Employee Retention

Demonstrating adequate productivity potential and finally securing a place in a Remploy factory was no guarantee of remaining with the company. From the opening of the first factories through to 1979, some 3,838 employees were dismissed from Remploy due to being 'unsuitable for further employment'.<sup>154</sup> As with the establishment of a benchmark of productivity for recruitment into the factory, the introduction of a similar benchmark for the existing workforce and the termination of the employment of those unable or unwilling to reach this level was accepted by both the Remploy Board and by the MOL / DE across successive governments.<sup>155</sup> As a corollary of the focus on improving the commercial efficiency of the company described in Chapter Three, there was a focus on improving the production capacity

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<sup>154</sup> TNA BM 3/67, Remploy Limited, 'Report on Employment of Disabled People in Remploy - 1979, Appendix 9'.

<sup>155</sup> TNA LAB 20/929, 'Record of Meeting' (20.07.1955); 'Note from Mr. St. John Wilson to S. Green, D.P.2587/1955' (18.10.1955); 'Sir Brunel Cohen's Notes, D.P.2747/55' (09.11.1955); 'Note from Sir W. Monckton to Sir Brunel Cohen, D.P.2747/1955' (16.12.1955). The letter was discussed at the meeting of the Board in Jan 1956. TNA LAB 20/929, 'Note from Mr. St. John Wilson to Mr. J Wade, D.P. 2747/1955' (17.03.1956); 'Note from Sir Brunel Cohen to Mr. I. MacLeod, D.P.2747/1955' (27.03.1956).

of the workforce, and the termination of employment for those who could not maintain the given standard.<sup>156</sup>

Remploy had always had the ability to terminate the employment of those deemed ‘unemployable’ – i.e. those who could no longer make an adequate contribution to the productivity of the factory.<sup>157</sup> This was greatly aided by the introduction of an employment ‘trial period’ in 1956 which allowed for the removal of workers who proved to be unproductive following their recruitment.<sup>158</sup> This was not just for isolated cases, as can be seen in the case of the Barking factory in 1970, when it was reported that nine employees had recently been let go during their trial period.<sup>159</sup> Even following the completion of this trial period, every worker underwent a routine medical examination every six months to ensure they were still capable of working in the factory.<sup>160</sup> By 1975 this had changed to an annual review.<sup>161</sup> Alongside these were continuous informal assessments made by the factory manager, and the factory doctor on his regular visits.<sup>162</sup> As with initial recruitment, the worker was subject to assessment by a doctor and factory manager to determine their ability to maintain productivity. This saw the creation of a system of ‘functional assessment’ referred to as ‘M.U.S.I.C’, under which each employee was graded in terms of Mobility,

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<sup>156</sup> See for example, TNA BM 8/49, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Two Hundred and Seventy-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (18.06.1970); ‘Minutes of the Two-Hundred and Eighty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (27.05.1971); TNA BM 8/79, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (22.01.1976); TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, ‘Objectives and Criteria of Success, Appendix 9: M.I.R. Department Circular No: 1758, Section 2 Entry Standards’ (20.02.1979).

<sup>157</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Fifty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (22.02.1950).

<sup>158</sup> TNA LAB 43/268, ‘Notes on letter from Mr. F.G. Willey’ (17.05.1956).

<sup>159</sup> ‘Steady Growth of “Sheltered” Employment’, *Financial Times* (07.04.1970).

<sup>160</sup> TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, ‘Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain’ (February, 1958), p. 9. ‘Work for the Disabled’, *The Times* (20.10.1952).

<sup>161</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, ‘Personnel Department Circular no:1173, Recruitment and Assessment of Section II Disabled Employees’ (17.01.1972).

<sup>162</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, ‘A Review of the Company during its first seven years’ (March, 1953), pp. 62-3.

Usefulness or dexterity, physical Strength, Intelligence and Consistency.<sup>163</sup> Similarly, each role in the factory could be graded in terms of the requirements in these areas.<sup>164</sup> In this way the factory manager and doctor could attempt to create a productivity profile of each employee and each role in the factory.<sup>165</sup> This system remained in place until it was revised in 1972 and replaced with a new system which included additional criteria with categories provided on the form as follows: 'Ability to work: Skill, Application, Tempo; Co-operation with supervision; Relationship with other employees; Attitude to disability; Attitude to work / motivation; Attendance; Punctuality; General Assessment'.<sup>166</sup> Each category was assessed on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the best.<sup>167</sup> The aspects listed indicate both the scope of assessment, with a combination of physical ability and general attitude towards work, and the subjective nature of some of these areas.

Initially, when a factory manager wished to terminate the employment of an employee deemed unproductive, they would have to submit a rationale together with a report from the factory doctor.<sup>168</sup> The case was then considered by the Industrial Relation Officer and the Principal Medical Officer, with the final decision coming from the Executive Director.<sup>169</sup> This process was designed explicitly to 'protect the severely disabled from impatient and intolerant Managers'.<sup>170</sup> By 1956 the process had changed slightly, with the factory manager notifying the Trade Union Representative of the intention to dismiss the worker. Reports by the factory manager and doctor

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 'Appendix C'.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, 'Personnel Department Circular no:1173, Recruitment and Assessment of Section II Disabled Employees' (17.01.1972).

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), pp. 40-1.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

were then submitted to Head Office, alongside any Trade Union representation, to be considered by one of the company directors in consultation with the company's Chief Medical Officer.<sup>171</sup>

Unfortunately there are no full surviving records of such cases, however, it is possible to get a sense of how employees were assessed as being unsuitable to remain in Remploy. Towards the end of 1951 a report was compiled on the 'Least Productive Employees' across the company, with the goal of determining who should not be retained.<sup>172</sup> Included in the file are some of the comments made by the Principal Medical Officer, such as 'his disability has increased until he is now practically unable to perform any useful work'.<sup>173</sup> Similarly, in an article for the *Financial Times* in 1970, reporting on a visit to the Barking Remploy factory, it was noted that two employees had recently been let go as they 'were so disabled that their already low productivity deteriorated even further'.<sup>174</sup> This is perhaps best highlighted in the case of the Remploy factory in Liverpool in 1954. The Labour MP, Mrs Braddock, contacted the Minister of Labour on behalf of one of her constituents working at the factory.<sup>175</sup> Braddock explained that 'a Medical Officer has recently visited and informed certain of the Employees that their output must considerably increase or the possibility of their being removed from the factory will be considered'.<sup>176</sup> She continued by making reference to the particular individual who had seen her, explaining that he 'is very badly disabled and the effect on his mental condition of these interviews is rather distressing...he informs me that he has always attempted to

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<sup>171</sup> TNA LAB 43/268, 'Note to Mr. Frank Anderson M.P.' (19.07.1956).

<sup>172</sup> TNA BM 8/13, Remploy Limited, 'Executive Director Report no. 69' (23.01.1952).

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup>, 'Steady Growth of "Sheltered" Employment', *Financial Times* (07.04.1970).

<sup>175</sup> TNA LAB 43/204; 'Obituary: Mrs Bessie Braddock', *The Guardian*, (14.11.1970).

<sup>176</sup> TNA LAB 43/268, 'Letter from Mrs. E. M. Braddock' (20.03.1954).

do the best he can in the Department in which he is employed'.<sup>177</sup> Having been asked to look into the matter by the MOL, Remploi replied regarding the specific events, explaining that the Company's Principle Medical Officer had visited the factory to investigate 'cases of employees of low productive potential which had been referred to Head Office', which included the individual who had seen Mrs Braddock.<sup>178</sup> The reply noted that 'the employees concerned admitted that they could do much better and as this was borne out by their medical assessments, they were told that they would be expected to show an improvement in their work and that the position would be reviewed in the near future'.<sup>179</sup> It is clear then that it was not the disabled employees themselves who were left to judge their own productivity limits. Instead, it was a combination of Remploi management and the factory doctors who assessed the productivity level of each worker and decided whether they were working to their capacity.<sup>180</sup>

The increasing focus on the need for disabled workers to maximise their productivity as a pre-requisite for continued employment led to criticism and occasions of disputes between management and workers. As well as the case involving Mrs. Braddock, there were a number of occasions of MPs questioning the productivity pressures being placed upon workers. In 1951 the Labour MP John McKay noted in Parliament 'there is dissatisfaction in the Remploi Factory at Wallsend about the pressure put upon the men to produce a given output regardless of their varied disabilities and skill'.<sup>181</sup> The following year John Paton, Labour MP for Norwich, asked why four men from the

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> TNA LAB 43/268, 'Note from Mr. Mallett to Mr. Coburn' (30.03.1954).

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploi Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors' (17.02.1960).

<sup>181</sup> Mr. John McKay and Mr. Lee, *Hansard* (24.07.1951), vol. 491, cc. 180-1.

factory in his constituency had been discharged due to 'low efficiency', since 'low efficiency...[is] the very reason why Remploy exists'.<sup>182</sup> He continued his attack the following month, stating 'I think there is ground for the belief, which is widespread now among the employees in Remploy, that there is distinct pressure coming from headquarters to step up the productive efficiency of the factory'.<sup>183</sup> Similar concerns in terms of dismissals were also expressed by other MPs and were raised during the meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party during its discussions on Remploy.<sup>184</sup> In 1971 Remploy was taken before an Industrial Tribunal following a complaint from a worker at the Kidbrooke factory who had been dismissed due to his being 'no longer capable of useful productive work'.<sup>185</sup> The Tribunal supported Remploy in this case.

As well as the level of productivity when in the factory, the question of where disability or illness prevented workers from attending was also considered in whether someone retained their place in Remploy. From the opening of the first factory in 1946 through to January 1979, some 9,807 Remploy workers had been 'struck off strength owing to prolonged sickness'.<sup>186</sup> Initially, Remploy had allowed for an absence due to 'sickness' for up to two months.<sup>187</sup> Following this period, a doctor assessed the likelihood of the employee being able to return to work in four weeks, and if this was unlikely the workers employment was terminated.<sup>188</sup> In an attempt to increase production efficiency the time allowed for sickness was reduced to one

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<sup>182</sup> Mr. John Paton and Sir.W. Monckton, *Hansard* (03.04.1952),vol. 498, cc. 1908-9.

<sup>183</sup> Mr. John Paton, *Hansard* (06.05.1952), vol. 500, cc. 342-52.

<sup>184</sup> Mr. G. Thomas, *Hansard* (17.06.1952), vol. 502, cc. 991-2; TNA LAB 43/268, 'Note to Mr. Frank Anderson MP' (19.07.1956).

<sup>185</sup> TNA BM 8/49, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Two-Hundred and Eighty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (27.05.1971).

<sup>186</sup> TNA BM 3/67, Remploy Limited, 'Report on Employment of Disabled People in Remploy - 1979, Appendix 9'.

<sup>187</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), para. 339, p. 26, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017).

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

month in 1952, though this drew political attention and was soon changed back.<sup>189</sup>

With absenteeism being one of the key figures which each factory submitted to Head Office, and which impacted heavily on factory productivity, it is unsurprising that attendance became an area of assessment for individual worker's themselves.<sup>190</sup>

Continued employment in a Remploy factory was therefore predicated on an employee's ability to attain and maintain a standard of productivity. Individual productivity was measured and assessed both formally and informally by the factory manager and doctor, both in terms of the level required for the factory and the individual's perceived maximum level. Having established the emphasis on productivity in both recruitment and retention, this chapter will now consider the resulting composition of disabilities within Remploy, referred to by the company as its 'disability mix'.

### Remploy's 'Disability Mix'

Anderson suggested that Remploy concentrated on providing employment for people with particular disabilities, specifically, 'those with pulmonary tuberculosis, congenital deformities, heart and lung disease, and epilepsy'.<sup>191</sup> This chapter has already shown that the suggestion that Remploy focused recruitment in this way is misplaced. The focus for recruitment and retention was based around individual productivity, and as such there was no specific focus on employing people with certain kinds of disability. Each factory could only recruit from the local disabled

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<sup>189</sup> Mr. John Paton and Sir. W. Monckton, *Hansard* (03.04.1952), vol. 498, cc. 1908-9.

<sup>190</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, 'Pontefract Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standard for Employment at Remploy Limited' (28.01.1975); 'Cardiff Area Liaison Officer to Personnel Director: Disabled People Entry Standards for Employment in Remploy' (28.01.1975); 'Personnel Department Circular no:1173, Recruitment and Assessment of Section II Disabled Employees' (17.01.1972).

<sup>191</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 183.



population and this was determined based on their suitability to be productive in the job available. There were however, two important exceptions to this. The first was blind people, who were not generally employed by Rempoy, nor intended to be, as they were long seen as a distinct group who had been provided for by their own legislation and specialist sheltered employment.<sup>192</sup> The other exception was those suffering from Tuberculosis (TB) for which special Rempoy factories were established. This was necessitated by the fear of contagion and the large numbers of TB cases noted as needing sheltered employment by the MOL as Rempoy began to operate.<sup>193</sup> By 1952, seven 'Special' Rempoy factories were dedicated to those with TB.<sup>194</sup> As the number of applicants suffering with tuberculosis declined, these factories were eventually converted in the 1960s to standard factories.<sup>195</sup> Beyond these specific cases, recruitment into Rempoy was not based upon the inclusion or exclusion of particular disabilities within the Section II register.

As Appendix 3 shows, Rempoy's focus on productivity meant that the 'disability mix' in Rempoy did differ, though only marginally, from that of the Section II register itself. There was, for example, a greater proportion of those in Rempoy with lower-limb disabilities, than those with impaired vision. Anderson's assertion that Rempoy focused upon certain 'types' of disability, was based on the information presented here in Table 4.3, which was featured in an article published by a MOL official in 1958. The disabilities Anderson suggests were targeted for employment,

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid.; Reiss, *Bind Workers Against Charity*, pp. 141-3.

<sup>193</sup> TNA LAB 20/173, NACED, 'The employment of the infectious case of tuberculosis in industry' (1945).

<sup>194</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Rempoy Limited, 'A Review of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), pp. 19-20; TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, 'Rempoy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain' (February, 1958), p. 8. Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain*, p. 238.

<sup>195</sup> TNA BM 10/2, Rempoy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Rempoy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 26.

were simply those grouped together as the most common in Remploy at this point. As can be seen in Appendices 2, 3 and 4 this changed throughout the period considered in this thesis. Appendix 4 illustrates the changing ‘disability mix’ from 1964 through to 1979, and highlights that the key developments were the reduction in employees suffering from TB and the increase in employees with ‘mental disabilities’.<sup>196</sup> As was previously noted, following the passing of the Mental Health Act in 1959, former mental hospital patients became eligible for registration and thus potentially eligible for a place in Remploy.<sup>197</sup> As government policy began to reflect the priority of de-institutionalisation of mental health patients, with a move to community-orientated care, Remploy was indeed considered part of this provision.<sup>198</sup> Remploy had, however, always included people considered severely disabled owing to mental illness.<sup>199</sup> The only immediate result of the passing of the 1959 Act was some limited experimentation with the more ‘serious’ cases of mental illness the company might be expected to cater for such as schizophrenia.<sup>200</sup> The real impact of the Act, in terms of Remploy, was in supporting a longer-term trend of an increasing number of people on the Section II register being considered ‘mentally disabled’.<sup>201</sup> While this did reflect a steady shift in terms of who could apply for Remploy, it does not seem to have led to

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<sup>196</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, ‘Objectives and Criteria of Success’ (July, 1980), p. 21.

<sup>197</sup> TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, ‘A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited’ (May, 1979), p. 26.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.; TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), pp. 33-4. Roulstone and Prideaux, *Understanding Disability Policy*, pp. 36-9; J. Welshman, ‘Inside the walls of the hostel, 1940-74’ in P. Dale and J. Melling, *Mental Illness and Learning Disability Since 1850* (Abingdon, Routledge, 2006), p. 200.

<sup>199</sup> TNA LAB 20/444, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director Report 36: Appendix B’ (18.11.1948); TNA BM 5/9, Remploy Limited, ‘Factory Manager’s Guide’ (1949). *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), Annex 9, p. 100, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017).

<sup>200</sup> TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, ‘A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited’ (May, 1979), p. 26.

<sup>201</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, ‘Objectives and Criteria of Success, Appendix No 7’ (July, 1980); TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), pp. 33-4. Mr Dudley Smith, (21.06.1972), *Hansard*, vol. 839 c.680.

any change in the recruitment process itself, the emphasis on productivity, or how Remploy fundamentally operated during the period considered here.<sup>202</sup>

**Table 4.3: Ten largest disability groups in Remploy, January 1957.**

<b>Disability group</b>	<b>Percentage of workforce</b>
Pulmonary tuberculosis	11.4%
Injuries and diseases (except tuberculosis) of lower limb	8.9%
Diseases of the heart or circulatory system	8.3%
Diseases of the lungs (except tuberculosis)	8.2%
Epilepsy	7.7%
Amputation of one leg	5.9%
Nervous and mental disorders (other than neurosis, psycho neurosis and epilepsy)	5.2%
Injuries and diseases of the spine (other than paraplegia and tuberculosis), curvature of the spine, spondylitis	4.8%
Paraplegia	4.5%
Arthritis and rheumatism	4.5%

Source: TNA LAB 13/1029, J. L. Edwards, 'Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain', *International Labour Review*, Vol. LXXVII, No. 2 (February, 1958), p. 8.

Whilst Anderson correctly identified the most common disabilities in Remploy at a particular point, it is important to note that this was a by-product of the recruitment process, not the driver behind it, and that this 'disability mix' changed over time. Beyond the exceptions noted for blind people and those with TB, the fundamental question for recruitment was not a person's disability, but their ability to contribute productively to their local factory regardless of it. This chapter will now consider the question of the employment in Remploy of non-disabled people.

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<sup>202</sup> TNA BM 3/70, Remploy Limited, 'Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploy' (March, 1981). For more on this see A. Holroyde, 'Sheltered Employment and Mental Health in Britain: Remploy c.1945-81', in S.J. Taylor and A. Brumby (eds.), *Healthy Minds in the Twentieth Century: In and Beyond the Asylum* (Palgrave Macmillan, Forthcoming), pp. 113-35.

## The Non-Disabled Workforce

In virtually all descriptions of Remploy's workforce it has been assumed that it consisted entirely of disabled people, thereby precluding any notion of non-disabled workers. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, this has similarly been the long-standing view of Remploy themselves. This assumption has also led to Remploy being highlighted as an example of 'segregated' employment, with the negative connotations this generates.<sup>203</sup> Topliss, however, suggested that it was 'always envisaged' that Remploy include a proportion of non-disabled workers to aid production.<sup>204</sup> This chapter can reveal the reality of this for the first time.

In terms of non-disabled workers, there were always a number of non-disabled staff members employed by Remploy in management, clerical and administrative roles, but it is apparent that there were also a significant number of non-disabled employees performing productive work on the factory floor.<sup>205</sup> The inclusion of this workforce, referred to as the 'fit' workforce by Remploy, was explicitly an attempt to boost productivity.<sup>206</sup> Chapter Two has already demonstrated that Topliss was not correct in suggesting the inclusion of a non-disabled workforce was 'always envisaged', with very little of Remploy 'envisaged' prior to the company starting. In the case of the employment of a percentage of 'fit' workers, it was first discussed in 1947 with the impetus appearing to come from a visit by the Executive Director, Venn, to a

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<sup>203</sup> Millward, 'Invalid definitions, invalid responses', pp. 184-5; Humphries and Gordon, *Out of Sight*, p. 138; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 168; Slorach, *A Very Capitalist Condition*, p. 141; Hyde, 'Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s', p. 200; Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 74.

<sup>204</sup> Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, pp. 55-6.

<sup>205</sup> A distinction was made between the proportion of 'fit' employees overall and those who were 'production workers', TNA BM 8/2, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Fortieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (19.02.1958); TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success' (July, 1980), p. 72.

<sup>206</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 47.

sheltered workshop in London which included ‘fit men’ as twenty per cent of its workforce to boost production.<sup>207</sup> The Board agreed that Venn should approach the Minister of Labour ‘for authority to make similar arrangements in Remploy Factories’.<sup>208</sup> The question of the proportion of ‘fit’ to disabled workers was discussed, both in terms of the merits on production of a higher number, and the need to prevent it getting too high, on a number of occasions.<sup>209</sup> There was always, according to Remploy, the temptation to keep increasing the number of ‘fit’ workers to boost productivity, which was understandable given the financial pressures placed upon the company.<sup>210</sup> This was balanced against the understanding of the overall aim of the company being to employ severely disabled people.<sup>211</sup> This aim had of course already been modified somewhat to limit this to a certain section of ‘productive’ severely disabled people, but this was still keeping recruitment in the boundary of ‘Section II’ people, which the inclusion of ‘fit’ people was not. The agreed limit on the employment on non-Section II workers was set at fifteen per cent of the productive workforce, which was to remain the maximum allowed for the remainder of the period examined in this thesis.<sup>212</sup>

It has not been possible to determine the actual figures for the whole period, but what evidence there is indicates that Remploy kept to the limit on a company level. The

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<sup>207</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (29.07.1947).

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Thirty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (15.05.1957); ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Fortieth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (19.02.1958); ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Forty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (17.09.1958); ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Fifty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (16.09.1959); ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (15.06.1960); ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (19.10.1960).

<sup>210</sup> TNA BM 3/55, Remploy Limited, ‘Notes on MSC/Remploy Meeting’ (28.07.1978).

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, ‘A Review of the Company during its first seven years’ (March, 1953), p. 47; TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, ‘Objectives and Criteria of Success, Appendix 4’ (July, 1980), p. 72.

percentage of 'fit' production workers was twelve per cent in 1956, nine per cent in 1958, and 10.2 % in 1960.<sup>213</sup> Table 4.4 shows the numbers employed by Remploy, but does not distinguish between production workers and other staff members. Given that the percentage of 'fit' production workers is given at 10.2% for the same year, and the corresponding numbers for the years 1966-76, again including all non-production staff, in Table 4.5, it would be reasonable to suppose a general maintenance of the proportion of 'fit' production workers in line with the increasing overall employee number. Accepting this would suggest that the overall percentage of 'fit' employees on productive work was unlikely to have exceeded the fifteen per cent limit.

As noted however, company policy did not always reflect the factory reality, and whilst Remploy might have kept to this limit overall, there were instances of individual factories exceeding it.<sup>214</sup> Table 4.6 shows those factories breaching the limit in 1960. Such breaches were excused where they were temporary measures required to ensure an order was fulfilled, as was apparently the case for the Holloway, Oldham, Aycliffe and Yardley factories.<sup>215</sup> These figures also highlight the local variation in the employment of 'fit' personnel. Tables 4.7 and 4.8, showing the percentages of 'fit' workers for a selection of factories for the years 1947 and 1959 add to this. It is clear that some factories would employ more 'fit' personnel than

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<sup>213</sup> TNA LAB 43/268, 'Notes on letter from Mr. F.G. Willey' (17.05.1956); TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Fortieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (19.02.1958); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Forty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (17.09.1958); TNA BM 8/32, Remploy Limited, 'Managing Director Report No. 86, Personnel Management: Appendix A' (11.04.1960).

<sup>214</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Fifty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors' (16.09.1959); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (15.06.1960).

<sup>215</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Fifty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors' (16.09.1959); 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (15.06.1960); TNA BM 8/32, Remploy Limited, 'Managing Director's Report No. 86, Personnel Management: Appendix A' (11.04.1960).

others, including in excess of the limit, where as other's would not. In 1959, for example, we can see that the two factories in Sheffield have a significant difference in the percentage of 'fit' personnel employed.

**Table 4.4: Breakdown of Remploy Employees, 1960.**

Fit	2,233
Section I	107
Section II	6,313
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,653</b>

Source: TNA BM 8/32, Remploy Limited, 'Managing Director's Report No. 86, Personnel Management: Appendix A' (11.04.1960).

**Table 4.5: Breakdown of Yearly Average of Remploy Employees, 1966-76.**

	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Disabled	6,893	6,852	7,017	7,352	7,448	7,567	7,559	7,960	7,990	8,190	8,370
Fit	2,497	2,443	2,342	2,334	2,367	2,327	2,315	2,214	2,144	2,218	2,310
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,390</b>	<b>9,295</b>	<b>9,359</b>	<b>9,686</b>	<b>9,815</b>	<b>9,894</b>	<b>9,874</b>	<b>10,174</b>	<b>10,134</b>	<b>10,408</b>	<b>10,680</b>

Source: TNA BM 8/84, Remploy Limited, "Remploy in the Long-Term", Managing Director's Basic Study Group, Appendix 4' (13.04.1977).

**Table 4.6: Remploy factories with above 15% 'fit' in production workforce, 1960.**

Factory	% of 'fit' workers on productive labour force
Aycliffe	34 %
Oldham	34 %
Holloway	29 %
Yardley	28 %
Sheffield '2'	25 %
Hull 'X' (Tuberculosis factory)	21 %
Barrow	20 %
Dalmuir	17 %
Bedlington	16 %
Denton	16 %
Huddersfield	16 %

Source: TNA BM 8/32, Remploy Limited, 'Managing Director's Report No. 86, Personnel Management: Appendix A' (11.04.1960).

**Table 4.7: Percentage of ‘fit’ workers in a selection Remploy Factories, 1947.**

Factory	% of ‘fit’ workers on productive labour force
Newcastle-on-Tyne	12 %
Wrexham	10 %
Salford	9 %
Bridgend	7 %
Edinburgh	6 %
S.E. London	6 %
Birmingham	5 %
Cleator Moor	5 %
Spennymoor	5 %
Halifax	3 %
Longton	3 %

Source: TNA LAB 20/399, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director’s Report No. 25, Appendix C’ (19.11.1947).

**Table 4.8: Percentage of ‘fit’ workers in a selection of Remploy Factories, 1959.**

Factory	% of ‘fit’ workers on productive labour force
Sheffield ‘X’ (Tuberculosis)	9%
Bolton	8%
Kidbrooke	7%
Sheffield	2%

Source: TNA BM 3/7, Remploy Limited, ‘Personnel Department: Percentage of Able-Bodied Personnel employed on Production in Remploy Factories’ (May, 1959).

In addition to non-disabled workers, examination reveals that Remploy also employed a number of Section I workers, who though still disabled, were not technically eligible under the terms of the DPEA, and again appear to have been incorporated due to their increased productivity. In terms of the proportion of Section I workers, as can be seen in Appendix 5 this was only ever a small number, peaking at 160 people in 1953 and gradually reducing over the period to reach only twenty people by 1979.



It is apparent therefore that the focus of Remploy on maximising the productivity of its workforce also resulted in the employment of a number of workers who were not Section II. This is important as the inclusion of non-disabled workers was a different question from selecting the most productive disabled workers as this openly contravened the mandate of Remploy as existing to employ the severely disabled in an explicit way. While the company-wide limit of fifteen per cent may have been maintained, this was still a significant number of ‘fit’ employees taking the place of Section II employees who were suppose to be the sole beneficiaries of Remploy. This was done solely to boost the productivity of the factories, in which the number of ‘fit’ workers could vary widely.

This is also important in the understanding of Remploy as a place of ‘segregated’ employment. This notion of Remploy, and indeed of sheltered employment generally, as a place where disabled workers were, and indeed where sheltered employment still exists, are, isolated from the non-disabled is a powerful one. It was this which formed the basis of the desire to move away from sheltered employment in the UK, in the name of ‘inclusion’ which grew in the 1980s and 90s, and which ultimately led to the closure of workshops and Remploy’s transition to a recruitment and employment services role. The concept of sheltered employment remains controversial and it is not the intention of this thesis to challenge the conception of such places as inherently ‘segregative’ as disability activists have suggested.<sup>216</sup> Neither is it possible to determine if such workers enjoyed equality of status. What this does challenge however, is the understanding of Remploy as segregated in absolute terms, as it is

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<sup>216</sup> Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 74.

clear that in many factories the severely disabled were working alongside non-disabled workers on the factory floor.

### Conclusions

The analysis here has revealed the hitherto unknown reality of who was working in Remploy and the basis of this selection. In doing so it has challenged a number of assumptions and interpretations from both popular and academic accounts of the company. In terms of the former, it has been demonstrated that Remploy was not the exclusive domain of disabled ex-service personnel, either in principle or in practice. Furthermore, the notion of preference for this group does not appear to have been a significant advantage in gaining employment in Remploy and soon disappears from the records. Thus we can see that in the case of sheltered employment in Remploy, the long-held privilege in welfare and employment services for the war-disabled diminished quickly following the end of the Second World War, and Bevin's push for the end of differential treatment based upon the cause of disablement alone succeeded. Contrary then, to the arguments made by Anderson, Hampton and Borsay that ex-servicemen continued to occupy a privileged position in the allocation of services after the War, this has been shown to not be the case in Remploy.<sup>217</sup>

It has been demonstrated that taking for granted that Remploy fulfilled its purpose in terms of the DPEA, and therefore simply employed the 'severely disabled' is a mistake. Contrary to this image of Remploy as a catch-all scheme for this group, the company only provided employment for a select portion. Although the DPEA had a

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<sup>217</sup> See Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 187-9, 211; Elsey, 'The Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the Two World Wars', pp. 292-7; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 99, 199-209; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, pp. 160-62; Millward, 'Social Security Policy and the Early Disability Movement', p. 281; Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, p. 258.

broad definition of disability, eligibility for a place in Remploy through designation as Section II involved several barriers which put sheltered employment beyond the reach of a number of disabled people. Even then, fulfilling the eligibility criteria did not lead to employment for many. In this way it is possible to add those excluded from sheltered employment to the case of disabled people having been excluded from the welfare state more generally. For whilst Remploy did provide employment for thousands of severely disabled regardless of the origin of their disability, in common with other aspects of the DPEA, it did not live up to its initial promise of providing sheltered employment for all those needing it.<sup>218</sup> As a result, the achievement of ‘full employment’, so central to the classic welfare state, was not extended to the Section II population.

From being assessed as Section II, applicants were subject to further selection, with Remploy policy dictating that only those with a minimum standard of productivity were recruited, and the realities of local factory recruitment prioritising productivity even further. It was this assessment of individual potential productivity, performed by medical experts, bureaucrats and Remploy management, which formed the primary basis of entry for Remploy, rather than any particular disability or cause of disability. This also further supports the conclusions in Chapter Three, as a corrective to the view of sheltered workshops having been slowly turned from places of charitable and humanitarian concern in the classic welfare state, to places of commercial enterprise in the 1980s.<sup>219</sup> As has been illustrated, productivity and economic concerns always played a key role in Remploy and nowhere more so than in recruitment. Remploy factories attempted to be places of productive industry and recruited according to this

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<sup>218</sup> Roulstone and Prideaux, *Understanding Disability Policy*, pp. 27-8; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 1; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, pp. 197-201.

<sup>219</sup> Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 73.

conception, including taking on a percentage of non-disabled workers. For those who managed to get over the various hurdles, finally gaining employment with Remploy was no guarantee of a job with the company for life, with maintaining a level of productivity a pre-requisite for continued employment. Contrary to the suggestions of Borsay, Thane and Bolderson, Remploy was clearly no place for 'ineffective' or non-productive workers.<sup>220</sup> Though the DPEA created two categories of disabled people, the application of its policies effectively created a third category deemed too unproductive even for sheltered employment.

This evidence has further shown the importance of understanding the realities of local administration of national schemes such as Remploy. It is clear that there was a real gulf between Remploy's central policy and the local administration which was actually involved in recruiting. As such we should not assume that central policy espoused by organisations reflected the reality for disabled people on the ground.<sup>221</sup> In order to understand the experiences of disabled people in attempting to access welfare services it is vital to examine the points of access to services they experienced. In the case of Remploy it is clear that candidates were subject to wide local variances in recruitment practice and standards.

Remploy provided sheltered employment for thousands of severely disabled people during the period of the classic welfare state. However, it was not the catch-all scheme for Section II people as has been generally assumed. A great many severely disabled people were excluded from employment as commercial viability became the

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<sup>220</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 135; Bolderson, 'The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance', p. 178; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, p. 225.

<sup>221</sup> Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 56.

focus. Throughout the period, entry into Remploi and continued employment was subject to meeting a number of standards, maintaining a minimum level of productivity, continuous assessment, and the vagaries of local factory particularities. The following chapter will build upon this analysis of the workforce by focusing specifically upon the experiences of women working in Remploi.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Women in Remploy: Access, Segregation and Status**

Building from the previous chapter's consideration of the composition of the Remploy workforce and the basis upon which workers were recruited, this chapter will consider the case of women in Remploy specifically. If the classic welfare state has been seen to have neglected disabled people from its provision, the same case has also been consistently made for women, with welfare and employment measures having been seen as serving to reinforce the traditional roles of men as workers and women as domestic care-givers.<sup>1</sup> For disabled women this resulted in a particular neglect as both women and disabled, which Oliver deemed a 'double disability'.<sup>2</sup> In the case of Remploy specifically there is a mixed conception of the place of disabled women. The pervading assumption that Remploy operated as a coherent catch-all scheme, as well as implying it simply employed the 'severely disabled', which the previous chapter has shown to not be true, also implies that it was open to both disabled men and women equally.<sup>3</sup> The current understanding within Remploy itself,

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<sup>1</sup> Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, p. 258; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, pp. 254-6; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 40-3, 146; Page, *Revisiting the Welfare State*, p. 40; Gladstone, 'The welfare state and the state of welfare', p. 23; Deakin, *The Politics of Welfare*, pp. xiv, 4; Gladstone, *The Twentieth Century Welfare State*, pp 6-7; Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, pp. 62-3; Pierson, *Beyond the Welfare State?*, pp. 69-79; Pierson 'Theory in British Social Policy', pp. 21-3; J. Stewart, 'The Twentieth Century', pp. 19-21; Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, pp. 35-6; Brown, *The British Welfare State*, p. 53; Thane, 'Visions of Gender in the Making of the British Welfare State', p. 93; Crompton and Sanderson, *Gendered Jobs & Social Change*, pp. 49-50.

<sup>2</sup> Oliver, *The Politics of Disablement*, p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> Hampton, 'Discovering Disability', p. 80; Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain*, p. 237; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, p. 168; Hyde, 'Sheltered and Supported Employment in the 1990s', p. 200; Bridgen and Lowe, *Welfare Policy Under the Conservatives 1951-1964*, pp. 262-3; Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, p. 109; Topliss, *Provision for the Disabled*, p. 56; Reiss, *Blind Workers Against Charity*, p. 139; Elsey, 'The Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the Two World Wars', pp. 276-7; Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 71; Land, Lowe and Whiteside, *The Development of the Welfare State 1939-1951*, p. 204; Mantin, 'Coalmining and the National Scheme for Disabled Ex-Servicemen after the First World War', p. 170; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 135; Bolderson, 'The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance', p. 178; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, p. 225.

at the time of writing, is that the employment of an increasing number of women was a key aspect in the company's development. Yet it is the contention of scholars such as Anderson, Borsay, Hampton, Thane and Sainsbury that disabled women were disadvantaged in accessing the employment provisions of the welfare state, which were 'allocated overwhelmingly to men'.<sup>4</sup> Consideration of the case of Remploy specifically in this has only been briefly referenced by Anderson who suggested, without detailed examination, that women were largely excluded from Remploy due to its nature as an industrial enterprise, as well as issues of accommodation and transport.<sup>5</sup> This chapter will therefore seek to clarify whether the experience of women in terms of Remploy was one of exclusion, by establishing the gender make-up of Remploy for the first time over the period, and through a detailed examination of the themes highlighted by Anderson.

As well as this issue of neglect in welfare provision, consideration of Remploy also provides an opportunity to examine further issues of employment for disabled women, which have thus-far received little attention. There is broad agreement from scholars such as Lowe, Summerfield, Laybourn, Glucksmann, Lewis, Gladstone, Thane, Holloway, and Burley that the position of women in employment generally during the post-war period considered here was characterised by gender segregation, low-pay, inferior status, and a lack of opportunity for advancement.<sup>6</sup> The case of disabled

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<sup>4</sup> Anderson, 'British Women, Disability and the Second World War', p. 50; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 169-70; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 119; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 134; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, pp. 224-5; Sainsbury, 'Disabled People and the Personal Social Services', p.188.

<sup>5</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 170; Anderson, 'British Women, Disability and the Second World War', p. 49.

<sup>6</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 42-3; Laybourn, *Unemployment and Employment Policies Concerning Women in Britain*, p. 187; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, pp. 99-119; Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War*; Glucksmann, *Women Assemble*, p. 281; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 119-122; Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain*

women in these areas has not yet been examined, and so this chapter will explore these factors in turn within Remploy to determine the degree to which these were applicable for its disabled female employees.

This chapter will begin by examining the numbers of female workers in Remploy over the period, in order to reveal the gender mix in Remploy and to consider whether Remploy was indeed male-dominated. Following this I want to examine Anderson's assertions about access to Remploy to determine the factors which may have prevented women engaging with the company. The chapter will then consider the experiences of women within Remploy and test whether they experienced the same issues of segregation, lower pay and lower status, as did women in outside industry. This will begin with the question of whether Remploy was gender segregated, both in terms of work and social activities, which will be followed by consideration of the status of women workers in terms of pay, promotion and representation. In doing so this chapter will further clarify the understanding of Remploy, use the case of the company to test the current orthodoxy in terms of the neglect of women in the provisions of the welfare state, and extend the current understanding of the key features of employment for women to include the case of Remploy's disabled employees.

### The Gender Composition of the Remploy Workforce

The first issue to consider is the numbers of disabled women who were employed by Remploy, in order to determine whether such provision was indeed predominantly allocated to men as has been suggested of welfare and employment provision

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*Since 1840*, p. 186; Thane, 'Towards Equal Opportunities? Women in Britain since 1945', pp. 183-208; Lewis, *Women in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 78-91.



generally. Unfortunately there is no document extant which provides a complete breakdown of Remploy's disabled employees by gender for the entirety of the period considered in this thesis. Those figures which have been located are also problematic, being frequently contradictory, incomplete, for different times of year, or averages for a set period. Table 5.1 has been compiled from a range of sources and is intended to be indicative of the general trend in terms of the gender of Remploy's disabled employees.

As can be seen here, disabled women were always a minority in Remploy during the period 1946-1979. The initial numbers of female employees were pitifully small, taking six years of factory operation to reach a proportion of even five per cent of the overall disabled workforce. There was a steady growth in the number of female workers over the period. This increase in the number of women employed in the company reflected the trend in employment more generally in the post-war period.<sup>7</sup> In open employment, figures show that in 1951 women represented thirty-one per cent of the total workforce, ten years later, this had increased to thirty-three per cent, by 1971 this had grown to thirty-seven per cent, and by 1980 had reached forty per cent.<sup>8</sup> Though numbers of women in Remploy did increase steadily over the period, the proportion was far lower than that in open employment generally, as it still remained below twenty per cent of the overall Remploy workforce by 1979.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 119.

<sup>8</sup> Pemberton, 'The Transformation of the Economy', pp. 190-1; Lewis, *Women in Britain since 1945*, p. 65.

<sup>9</sup> Pemberton, 'The Transformation of the Economy', pp. 190-1; Pugh, *Women and the Women's movement in Britain*; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 119.

**Table 5.1: Numbers of Disabled Men and Women Employed in Remply, 1946-1979.**

Year	Men	Women	Total	Percentage of women workers
1946	160	4	164	2.43%
1947	587	12	599	2 %
1948	1749	40	1789	2.24%
1949	3868	111	3979	2.79%
1950	4781	158	4939	3.20%
1951	4797	161	4958	3.24%
1952	5547	291	5838	5%
1953	-	-	-	-
1954	6018	415	6433	6.45%
1955	-	-	-	-
1956	5461	402	5863	6.86%
1957	-	-	-	-
1958	5500	500	6000	8.33%
1959	-	-	-	-
1960	5637	747	6384	11.70%
1961	5495	756	6251	12.09%
1962	-	-	-	-
1963	-	-	-	-
1964	-	-	-	-
1965	5789	872	6661	13.09%
1966	-	-	-	-
1967	-	-	-	-
1968	-	-	-	-
1969	6387	1092	7479	14.6%
1970	6501	1165	7666	15.2%
1971	-	-	-	-
1972	-	-	-	-
1973	6534	1323	7857	16.83%
1974	6664	1349	8013	16.83%
1975	6770	1475	8245	17.88%
1976	6840	1535	8375	18.32%
1977	6466	1511	7977	18.94%
1978	-	-	-	-
1979	6450	1558	8008	19.45%

Sources: Remply Executive Director Reports in TNA LAB 20/187, LAB 20/399, LAB 20/444, LAB 20/35, LAB 20/43, LAB 20/1035, BM 8/13, BM 8/18, BM 8/81, BM 3/67; BM 10/12, 'Treasury Report Papers' (1955); TNA LAB 13/1029, J. L. Edwards, 'Remply: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain', *International Labour Review*, Vol. LXXVII, No. 2 (February, 1958); TNA BM 8/84, Remply Limited, 'National Consultative Committee Meeting: Personnel Statistics, Company Personnel Strengths' (14.04.1977).

Remploy as a whole was always therefore a male-dominated organisation as far as the composition of the workforce was concerned, and in terms of these simple statistics it is now possible to confirm that, as has been suggested of the provisions of the welfare state generally and in terms of employment services specifically, sheltered employment was indeed ‘allocated overwhelmingly to men’.<sup>10</sup> Having provided this confirmation here for the first time, this chapter will now consider why this was the case.

### Issues of Access and Entry to Remploy

The DPEA itself made no distinction between men and women.<sup>11</sup> According to this legislation, Remploy was intended to be open equally to both sexes. However, in considering the employment prospects for disabled women immediately following the Second World War, Anderson suggested in her most recent study on rehabilitation that when it came to Remploy ‘women may not have been able to avail themselves of this service’.<sup>12</sup> It was not explained in this instance why this should be so, though in an earlier article Anderson expanded her statement by suggesting that this was ‘due to problems with accommodation and transport’.<sup>13</sup> A further problem proposed by Anderson in this earlier article was that ‘Remploy also tended to concentrate on industry, an area where women were less likely to be employed’.<sup>14</sup>

In terms of accommodation, it appears Anderson was referring to her argument that following the Second World War, disabled women struggled to gain suitable housing,

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<sup>10</sup> Sainsbury, ‘Disabled People and the Personal Social Services’, p. 188

<sup>11</sup> DPEA.

<sup>12</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 170.

<sup>13</sup> Anderson, ‘British Women, Disability and the Second World War’, p. 49.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

resulting in many being forced into institutional settings or remaining with family.<sup>15</sup> This may indeed have been the case, with the provision of accommodation generally lying beyond the remit of Remploy.<sup>16</sup> Only one Remploy factory had hostel accommodation attached, the Radcliffe factory, which represented an exceptional case with a need to provide accommodation for disabled Polish ex-servicemen who had fought for Britain during the Second World War, though it was noted that beyond this ‘there have been isolated instances where accommodation has been found either in nearby hostels or in billets’.<sup>17</sup> In general however, Remploy was not responsible for providing accommodation for its workers, either male or female. In terms of problems with transport, it appears that Anderson was referring to her argument that in the allocation of disabled ‘motor cars’ by the MOP for the most severely disabled people, men received them quicker than women.<sup>18</sup> It is not clear how much this would affect the recruitment of women into Remploy specifically. As was noted in Chapter Four, Remploy factories were situated to allow access via public transport with some financial assistance available for travel expenses. It may be that disabled women had specific troubles with these areas as Anderson suggests, which is beyond the remit of this thesis and would require further detailed research to examine. There is, however, nothing in the extensive number of documents examined in this thesis which suggests that either Remploy or the MOL and its successors, felt that this was a particular reason for the low numbers of female employees.

A more detailed examination is required to consider Anderson’s assertion that Remploy’s position as part of ‘industry’ was fundamentally problematic for disabled

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<sup>15</sup> Anderson, *Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 154-69.

<sup>16</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, ‘A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years’ (March, 1953), p. 37.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Anderson, ‘British Women, Disability and the Second World War’, pp. 47-8.

women, as this was an area where women were generally less likely to be employed. This suggests that either women were not interested in joining Remploy, or that Remploy was not interested in employing women. In terms of the latter, the company's central recruitment policy itself does not appear to have explicitly privileged men over women. There is no evidence in any of the records examined on recruitment for this thesis of the idea of women being considered less desirable as workers or recommendations that they be excluded from recruitment. There was similarly no mention of such an attitude in the examination undertaken by the NACED on the issue of unemployment 'among registered disabled women' in 1951.<sup>19</sup> As part of this investigation, findings from questions asked of MOL Regional Officers suggested that there was an issue with those disabled women designated as Section I in finding work, with some employers apparently 'cautious' in taking them on, but there was no mention of any similar issue with those designated as Section II.<sup>20</sup>

There is also evidence that as Remploy began to operate the Remploy Board was expecting to recruit a number of female workers and did not see them as a less-appealing workforce. In his report for June 1946 the Executive Director of Remploy revealed the expectation of the inclusion of women when he commented on the numbers employed at the Bridgend factory since its opening, noting that 'more men and a few women would have been engaged for work' had the adaptations needed to

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<sup>19</sup> TNA LAB 20/591, NACED, 'Training and Employment Committee T.E.C.45' (31.10.1951).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.; TNA LAB 20/591, 'Letter from MOL Wales Office to E.R. Harris' (19.05.1951); 'Letter from MOL Southern Regional Office to E.R. Harris' (17.05.1951); 'Letter from MOL Manchester Regional Office to E.R. Harris' (23.05.1951); 'Letter from MOL East and West Ridings Regional Office to E.R. Harris' (23.05.1951); 'Letter from MOL Eastern Regional Office to E.R. Harris' (28.05.1951); 'Letter from MOL Bristol Regional Office to E.R. Harris' (28.05.1951); 'Letter from MOL North Midlands Regional Office to E.R. Harris' (31.05.1951); 'Letter from MOL Scottish Headquarters to E.R. Harris' (19.05.1951).

turn the former ordnance factory into a Remploy factory been further advanced.<sup>21</sup> A similar comment was made the following month as these adaptations were nearing completion, with the Executive Director noting ‘it is hoped to employ more men and a few women during the next few weeks’.<sup>22</sup> Of the Longton Disabled Soldiers and Sailors Cardboard factory which had been taken over that month, he noted the intention of replacing the several non-disabled workers in the factory with disabled ‘men and women’.<sup>23</sup> The first female worker in Remploy was employed in 1946 as ‘a telephone operator’; with the Executive Director later commenting that she was ‘working the telephone switchboard quite well’.<sup>24</sup> A further intake of three disabled women workers were taken on at Longton soon after, with the Executive Director again noting favourably that ‘the women are making good progress and their health is improving as a result of the work’.<sup>25</sup> In addition to this, soon after its opening, six disabled women were called to interview as possible employees for the Bridgend factory.<sup>26</sup> There is thus no evidence that the Remploy Board itself was seeking to exclude the recruitment of women as policy.

However, while these cases may have reflected the attitude of the Remploy Board, and while official company policy may not have discriminated against female applicants, as has been shown in previous chapters, there could often be a wide gulf between central policy and the reality at the local factory level. Chapter Four also

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<sup>21</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director Report No. 11: Appendix F’ (18.06.1946).

<sup>22</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director’ Report No. 12: Appendix F’ (23.07.1946).

<sup>23</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director Report No. 11: Appendix F’ (18.06.1946).

<sup>24</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director Report No. 12: Appendix F’ (23.07.1946). *Remploy News*, 5 (April, 1953).

<sup>25</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director Report No. 13: Appendix F’ (19.09.1946).

<sup>26</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director Report No. 15: Appendix C’ (19.11.1946).

illustrated that recruitment focused on the assessment of an individual's productivity for the role available, and this was ultimately decided at the factory level. It is entirely possible therefore that female applicants were considered less productive or desirable for the work available based upon the attitude of the individual factory manager. There is no direct evidence available to either support or discredit this notion, but it must be considered that women applicants would be assessed for a place at the factory by a panel of men who would inevitably bring their own attitudes and views into making their decision. The lack of archival evidence of discrimination in recruitment does not mean that it did not occur. Lewis, Bruley, Holloway and Thane have highlighted the stubborn prevalence of traditional views that women's primary responsibility was to home and family over work across this period and indeed beyond.<sup>27</sup> There is also the question of whether particular types of work done in Remploy were considered as particularly suitable for men or women, in which case gender might also play a more explicit, yet undocumented, role in recruitment which has not been preserved in the archives. This issue will be considered further in the following section of this chapter in consideration of whether Remploy was gender segregated.

In terms of how attractive Remploy, as part of 'industry', was for disabled women themselves, this does seem to be an important factor. This also appears to be a wider issue, reflected in the low numbers of women willing even to register as Section II on the Disabled Persons Employment Register, and thereby become eligible for sheltered employment such as Remploy. As of February 1946 only 469 women were registered

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<sup>27</sup> Lewis, *Women in Britain since 1945*, pp. 68, 85; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, p. 122; Lewis, *Women in England 1870-1950*, p. 184; Thane, 'Towards Equal Opportunities', pp. 198-201; Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, pp. 208-221.

as Section II, compared to 7,714 men.<sup>28</sup> It was noted by the MOL in its initial guidance for DROs that ‘since the inception of the register of disabled persons, it has become increasingly clear that the number of registered disabled women requiring employment is only a small proportion of the total and proportionately very much smaller over the whole employment field than the number of registered men’.<sup>29</sup> It was immediately apparent therefore that proportionally far fewer women were registering as disabled, and thereby making themselves eligible for the provisions contained in the DPEA including Remploy. The issue was raised in the Remploy Regional Executive Officers’ Conference in June 1946, during which ‘it was suggested that the registration of women was even less complete than amongst men’.<sup>30</sup> It was concluded that it was ‘probable that when we find employment for women, many more will register’.<sup>31</sup>

This does not seem to have been the case however, as by March 1947 while there was some increase in the numbers of women registered as Section II, then some 672 women, this was still few compared to the then 11,878 men registered.<sup>32</sup> The 1951 report from the NACED on ‘unemployment among disabled women’ noted that ‘it has always been felt that the number of women who have registered as disabled is much less than the number who would qualify for registration’.<sup>33</sup> The Piercy Report in 1956, included a breakdown of the numbers of unemployed registered disabled persons (Table 5.2), which proves illustrative of this continuing trend. Here we can

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<sup>28</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director Report No. 8: Appendix E’ (18.03.1946).

<sup>29</sup> TNA LAB 20/328, MOL, ‘Guide to the Quota and Designated Employment Schemes for the use of Disablement Resettlement Officers’.

<sup>30</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director Report No. 12: Appendix B’ (23.07.1946).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (11.03.1947), vol. 434 cc. 145w.

<sup>33</sup> TNA LAB 20/591, NACED, ‘Unemployment among registered disabled women, N.A.C. 171’,



see the numbers of registered Section II women seeking employment reaching 427 by 1956, compared to 3,523 men. There is also a difference, though not to the same degree, in the case of those registering as Section I and, as shown in Table 5.3, the combined total of women registering as either Section I or Section II. It is apparent from these figures that there was an initial general issue of women choosing not to register as disabled and thereby gain access to provision such as Remploy. The result was that Remploy was left with a pool of relatively few women recruits to choose from. This can be seen most clearly at the local level. For example, queries in Parliament about Remploy factories in the Stoke-on-Trent area in 1950 and again the following year, suggest that in employing eleven women the factories in the area had absorbed all of the eligible female recruits.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, in the case of the two Remploy factories in the Merseyside area, in 1954 they employed 135 men and sixteen women in an area where the numbers registered as Section II unemployed were 241 men and only seventeen women.<sup>35</sup>

**Table 5.2: Number of Registered Disabled Persons Unemployed, 1953-1956.**

Year	Section I			Section II			Total		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
1953	48,981	7,228	56,209	6,525	628	7,153	55,506	7,856	63,362
1954	43,189	6,476	49,665	5,069	523	5,592	48,258	6,999	55,257
1955	36,019	4,603	41,622	4,122	453	4,575	40,141	6,056	46,197
1956	32,438	5,466	37,904	3,523	427	3,950	35,961	5,893	41,854

Source: *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on The Rehabilitation Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 9883, Appendix G (1956), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 21/07/2017).

<sup>34</sup> Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (27.06.1950), vol. 476 cc. 2069; Sir Monckton, *Hansard* (20.11.1951), vol. 494 cc.33w.

<sup>35</sup> Mr. Watkinson, *Hansard* (15.03.1954), vol. 526 cc. 134w.

**Table 5.3: Number of Disabled People on the Disabled Persons Register, 1945-50.**

Year	Total	Men		Women	
		Number	%	Number	%
1945	97,576	91,172	93.4	5,733	5.9
1946	684,563	-	-	-	-
1947	828,666	765,992	92.4	55,400	6.7
1948	907,899	832,576	91.7	68,394	7.5
1949	935,007	850,135	90.9	77,834	8.3
1950	936,481	844,475	90.2	85,084	9.1

Source: H. Malisoff, 'The British Disabled Persons (Employment) Act', *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, vol. 5, no. 2 (1952), p. 252.

As has been indicated, the number of women in Remploy did steadily increase during the period examined in this thesis, and so too did the number of women registering as Section II who were unemployed and seeking sheltered employment. By the end of the 1960s the number of registered unemployed disabled women on the Section II register was 1,095, compared to 8,753 men.<sup>36</sup> By the end of 1979, the number of unemployed registered Section II women had grown to 1,434.<sup>37</sup> The reasons for this increase were considered by a working party setup by Remploy looking into the 'mix of disabilities employed by Remploy' in March 1981. The report produced suggested this growth in severely disabled women seeking sheltered employment was largely down to wider factors which applied to all women in terms of changes in expectations of women, sexual discrimination legislation, changing attitudes and the changing labour market.<sup>38</sup> These factors have also been highlighted by scholars such as Lewis, Bruley and Deirdre McCloskey in supporting the trend in general employment of

<sup>36</sup> TNA BM 8/51, Remploy Limited, 'Managing Director's Report No. 191, Appendix Pers. 1: Section II Disabled Employees' (November, 1969).

<sup>37</sup> TNA BM 3/70, Remploy Limited, 'Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploy' (March, 1981), p. 13.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 25-7.

increasing numbers of women choosing to enter work over the period.<sup>39</sup> However, as Table 5.4 shows, the numbers of registered Section II women always remained only a fraction of the numbers of Section II men.<sup>40</sup> It is apparent therefore that disabled women were simply less likely to register as Section II than men throughout the period, leaving Remploy a far shallower pool from which to recruit.

**Table 5.4: Number of Section II Registered Unemployed, 1963-1973.**

Year	Female	Male	Total	Percentage Female
1963	622	4,889	5,511	11.3%
1964	687	5,291	5,978	11.5%
1965	731	5,410	6,141	11.9%
1966	779	5,603	6,382	12.2%
1967	897	6,636	7,533	11.9%
1968	980	7,650	8,630	11.4%
1969	1,032	8,570	9,602	10.7%
1970	1,113	8,900	10,013	11.1%
1971	1,309	9,811	11,120	11.8%
1972	1,542	10,563	12,105	12.7%
1973	1,483	9,681	11,164	13.3%

Source: TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document: Table VIII' (October, 1973).

A number of reasons were suggested as to why so few women were registering as Section II in particular. The attractiveness of Remploy itself as an industrial concern was clearly recognised as an important factor in this. The Remploy chairman, Sir Robert Burrows, when giving evidence to the Select Committee on Estimates in 1952, suggested that the scarcity of women in Remploy was indeed because 'most of them

<sup>39</sup> Lewis, *Women in Britain since 1945*, pp. 65-85; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, p. 122; D. McCloskey, 'Paid Work' in I. Zweiniger-Bargielowska (ed.), *Women in Twentieth-Century Britain* (London, Routledge, 2014), pp. 169-70.

<sup>40</sup> TNA BM 8/51, Remploy Limited, 'Managing Director's Report No. 191, Appendix Pers. 1: Section II Disabled Employees' (November, 1969); TNA BM 3/70, Remploy Limited, 'Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploy' (March, 1981), p. 13.

apparently do not want to come out into industry'.<sup>41</sup> In the same year the MOL asked a selection of those eligible to register at local employment exchanges why they would not do so. There is no breakdown of whether these respondents were from people designated as Section I or Section II, but the chief reason given, both for men and for women, was that they saw 'no apparent benefit to do so' in terms of the provision that would become available.<sup>42</sup> This kind of apathy for what was offered through Rempoy was also suggested by the results of the interview panel set for six women for the first Rempoy factory at Bridgend in 1946. Of these women, two 'failed to turn up' for the interview and one simply 'refused the work' offered.<sup>43</sup> This attitude also appears to have been reflected in open employment for women more generally, as although factory work, limited to light and unskilled work, remained an area where women were employed after the Second World War, there was a growing preference in the period for 'clean, respectable work with a reasonable wage', with clerical work in particular proving a popular area.<sup>44</sup> Considering the issue in 1981, an internal Rempoy report concluded that one of the chief reasons for the lack of women registering over the preceding decades was the industrial nature of sheltered employment which was seen as continuing to appeal more to men than women.<sup>45</sup>

This issue was reflected in the Rempoy factory environments themselves. As Chapter Three showed, the establishment of many of the initial factories involved the company adopting existing premises of various kinds, which left little room for

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<sup>41</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), para. 281, p. 21, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017).

<sup>42</sup> TNA LAB 20/350, NACED, 'Joint meeting of the Medical Committee and the Training and Employment Committee, M.C 33 T.E.C 64' (1952).

<sup>43</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director Report No. 15: Appendix C' (19.11.1946).

<sup>44</sup> Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, p. 191.

<sup>45</sup> TNA BM 3/70, Rempoy Limited, 'Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Rempoy' (March, 1981), p. 25.

adaptation to suit the needs of the employees. However, as custom-built Remploy factories, designed and built by the Ministry of Works, began to replace these, there was a chance to provide an environment to suit the needs of the entire workforce, including women. There appears to have been little consideration of suiting the factory environment to the needs or desires of the women workers however, which both Braybon and Summerfield suggest was a common problem in outside industry as well.<sup>46</sup> In terms of the basic requirements of lavatory facilities, the original Remploy factory plans drawn up in 1946 show that whilst female lavatories were included, they were much smaller than those for men, with either one or two toilets only, apparently reflecting the expected proportion of workers.<sup>47</sup> Despite the steady increase in female employees over the period in question here, there was apparently no change to the allotted toilet facilities. The 'Standard Remploy Factory Plan', produced in 1975 showed again a significantly smaller lavatory for female workers, with only a small increase to three toilets.<sup>48</sup>

By the end of the period dealt with in this thesis, this did finally begin to be recognised as a pressing issue, with the Board noting that in order to cater for the increasing proportion of women taking up employment in the company there would need to be an urgent increase in women's toilet facilities.<sup>49</sup> An in-depth report on the objectives of Remploy, produced by the company in 1980, stressed that the lack of such facilities had likely led to the 'preclusion of females for employment'.<sup>50</sup> A further internal report produced the following year on Remploy's workforce, went

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<sup>46</sup> Braybon and Summerfield, *Out of the Cage*, p. 285.

<sup>47</sup> TNA BM 10/7, Ministry of Works, 'British Factories for Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Ltd.: Model Plans'.

<sup>48</sup> TNA BM 10/26, Remploy Limited, 'Standard Factory Plan' (13.02.1975).

<sup>49</sup> TNA BM 8/85, Remploy Limited, 'Company Estimates for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 1981' (1979).

<sup>50</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success' (July, 1980), p. 24.

further still and suggested that the company required a fundamental re-think of the factory environment in the face of the increasing numbers of female employees, stating ‘first, it would be advisable to ensure that welfare facilities such as canteens, rest rooms, lavatories etc are furnished in such a way as to be attractive to women’.<sup>51</sup> Such statements make it apparent that during the period considered here, women workers in Remploy were employed in an environment designed primarily around men. This state of affairs was to remain unchallenged until the very end of the period, when the problem was finally recognised. There is therefore clearly some validity in Anderson’s suggestion that Remploy’s nature as an industrial concern failed to adequately entice disabled women to take the steps necessary to gain employment with the company.

It is apparent, however, that this was not the only factor, with the traditional ties of women to the home also proving important. Many women who had entered into industry during the Second World War had decided to return to domestic life following its conclusion, or had been forced to make way for returning men, and this could equally have been the case for disabled women as well.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, the Executive Director of Remploy noted in 1952 that significant numbers of female employees continued to leave the company and employment upon getting married.<sup>53</sup> Women leaving work for marriage or to start a family was again a common feature of post-war employment generally, though this began to change over subsequent decades

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<sup>51</sup> TNA BM 10/34, Remploy Limited, ‘Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploy, Table II’ (June, 1981), pp. 38-9.

<sup>52</sup> Thane, ‘Towards Equal Opportunities?’, pp. 192-4; Wilson, *Women and the Welfare State*, p. 155; Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, pp. 191-2.

<sup>53</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), para. 339, p. 26, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017).

with more married women returning to work.<sup>54</sup> A more sinister explanation in this vein was proposed at the time by Dame Georgiana Buller, an early champion of disability rights and founder of St Loyes Training College for Cripples, who expressed her suspicions that the low numbers of registered disabled women was mainly due to ‘many cases where people liked to keep their disabled relatives at home for cheap labour’.<sup>55</sup> This was also a further reason proposed by Remploy in its 1981 report on the issue which suggested many disabled women had been ‘hidden by their families’.<sup>56</sup> These responses suggest that there were a number of reasons why so few disabled women registered for employment as Section II, which included both the perceived attractiveness of working in the industrial environment Remploy offered, and the persistence of traditional ties to the domestic sphere.

### Gender Segregation in Remploy

An understood key feature of employment for women in the post-war period considered in this thesis is the continued segregation of work along gendered lines. Despite the increasing numbers of women entering employment, the prevalence of a labour market ‘strictly divided by gender’ has been highlighted by a number of historians such as Thane, Bruley, Glucksmann, Gladstone, Holloway and Summerfield.<sup>57</sup> In this division, it was ‘women’s work’ which was viewed as lower-

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<sup>54</sup> Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, pp. 196-8; Lewis, *Women in Britain since 1945*, pp. 68, 76; McCloskey, ‘Paid Work’, pp. 169-70.

<sup>55</sup> ‘No “Remploy” Factory’, *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette* (03.06.1949); Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, pp. 101-2; C. Haines, ‘Buller, Dame (Audrey Charlotte) Georgiana (1883–1953), worker for the disabled’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (25.05.2006), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-51969> (accessed 26/08/2019).

<sup>56</sup> TNA BM 3/70, Remploy Limited, ‘Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploy’ (March, 1981), p. 25.

<sup>57</sup> Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, pp. 99, 119; Thane, ‘Towards Equal Opportunities?’, p. 188; Glucksmann, *Women Assemble*, p. 281; Gladstone, *The Twentieth Century Welfare State*, pp. 119-22; Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, p. 186.

skilled.<sup>58</sup> As both Thane and Lewis have explained this was predicated on the understanding that men were more productive than women owing to their physical attributes.<sup>59</sup> In considering severely disabled people however, this simple assumption of male physical ‘superiority’ cannot hold, with the reduced productivity and assumed lower-skill of work in sheltered employment reflecting some of the same characteristics as those seen to apply to ‘women’s work’.<sup>60</sup> Anderson has suggested that gender segregation also applied to disabled women in the immediate post-war period, but this notion has not yet received detailed examination.<sup>61</sup> This section will therefore examine the case of segregation in Remploy and thereby consider the case of severely disabled women over this period for the first time.

There initially appears to have been no gender segregation in the early period of Remploy, though of course there were only very few female workers. It appears that where women did work in the factories they were doing the same work as men.<sup>62</sup> In the case of the initial six women who interviewed for the Bridgend factory, there is no indication that they would be doing different work. The notion that all the disabled workers were doing the same work is also implied in discussions of wage rates among the Remploy Board at this time.<sup>63</sup> Indeed, given the work situation in many of the factories outlined in Chapter Three during the early years of Remploy, with factories

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<sup>58</sup> Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, pp. 99, 119; Lewis, *Women in Britain since 1945*, pp. 65-91.

<sup>59</sup> Lewis, *Women in Britain since 1945*, p. 79; Thane, ‘Towards Equal Opportunities?’, p. 188.

<sup>60</sup> D.S. Wilson, ‘Gender: Change and Continuity’, in P. Addison and H. Jones (eds.) *A Companion to Contemporary Britain 1939-2000* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2005), pp. 247-8; Bradley, *Men’s Work, Women’s Work*, p. 171.

<sup>61</sup> Anderson, ‘British Women, Disability and the Second World War’, p. 50; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 169-70.

<sup>62</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Executive Director Report No. 1’ (23.07.1945).

<sup>63</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (28.01.1947); ‘Minutes of the Twenty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (29.04.1947).



desperately struggling to find work, it would have proved extremely difficult to demarcate the limited and *ad hoc* work which was found.

This situation appears to change once Remploy became more organised into trade groups during the 1950s, from which point onwards there is clear evidence of some segregation in terms of particular types of work being considered suitable for men or for women. In terms of men, it was considered that factories in the Engineering Group and in the Furniture Group, which was the second largest group in terms of employee numbers, were undertaking work particularly suitable for men.<sup>64</sup> Such areas of work also reflected the traditional focus of male employment and education in the period more generally.<sup>65</sup> Table 5.5 reveals that by 1969 these two groups had the lowest proportion of women employees compared to men. For the Engineering Group this was one woman to every nine men, and in the Furniture Group one woman to twenty-five men. Table 5.6, though unfortunately missing the information for the Engineering Group, shows that by 1977 the Furniture Group remained chiefly the domain of male workers, with a ratio of one woman to every 24.5 men. An internal Remploy report compiled in 1980 noted that furniture manufacturing and engineering were ‘still regarded traditionally as male trades’.<sup>66</sup> In her sociological survey of historical developments in work segregation, Harriet Bradley suggested that in employment generally there was always strong resistance from men to doing jobs deemed as ‘women’s work’.<sup>67</sup> Something of this can be seen in Remploy, as in discussion amongst the Board in 1978 on the issue of changing trades in some of these factories,

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<sup>64</sup> TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, ‘A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited’ (May, 1979).

<sup>65</sup> Crompton and Sanderson, *Gendered Jobs & Social Change*, p. 54.

<sup>66</sup> TNA BM 10/34, Remploy Limited, ‘Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploy, Table II’ (June, 1981), pp. 38-9.

<sup>67</sup> Bradley, *Men’s Work, Women’s Work*, p. 145.

it was noted that many men would object to ‘being put onto “women’s work”’.<sup>68</sup> Similarly the report compiled in 1980 suggested that, in order to accommodate the increasing numbers of women employees entering the company, women would have to be given more work in the engineering and furniture factories, but warned that this could result in ‘resistance from men’.<sup>69</sup> Lewis has suggested that male workers in general could fear female substitution and wished to preserve the demarcation of jobs, though stressed this was not uniform.<sup>70</sup> In the examples here, it is not possible to determine if the Board’s concerns were valid, but they clearly believed such resistance was possible. The Board were therefore concerned about potential problems both in terms of moving men onto ‘women’s work’ and of moving women into ‘men’s work’, concerns which appear to have been consistent with issues in employment in the period more generally. The attitude in Remploy that certain work was ‘man’s work’ appears therefore to have remained throughout the period.<sup>71</sup>

**Table 5.5: Distribution of Women Disabled Employees across Remploy Trade Groups, 1969.**

<b>Trade Group</b>	<b>No. of Disabled Women Workers</b>	<b>Ratio of Female to Male workers</b>
Furniture	66	1:25
Engineering	163	1:9
Leather and Textiles	255	1:4
Packaging & Assembly	495	1:3.25
Knitwear	135	1:2.5

Source: TNA BM 8/51, Remploy Limited, ‘Managing Director Report’ (November, 1969).

<sup>68</sup> TNA BM 8/79, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Sixty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (16.03.1978).

<sup>69</sup> TNA BM 10/34, Remploy Limited, ‘Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploy, Table II’ (June, 1981), pp. 38-9.

<sup>70</sup> Lewis, *Women in Britain since 1945*, p. 84.

<sup>71</sup> *Remploy News*, 112 (November, 1976); Bradley, *Men’s Work, Women’s Work*, p. 116.

**Table 5.6: Distribution of Women Disabled Employees across Remploy Trade Groups, 1977.**

Trade Group	No. of Disabled Women Workers	Ratio of Female to Male workers
Leather and Textiles	548	1:2.7
Packaging & Assembly	839	1:3.1
Furniture	97	1:24.5

Source: TNA BM 8/84, Remploy Limited, 'National Joint Consultative Committee Meeting, Personnel Statistics' (April, 1977).

As a corollary, there were areas considered particularly suitable for women. Returning to Tables 5.5 and 5.6, we can see this reflected at a Trade Group level. The vast majority of women were employed in the Packaging and Assembly, and Leather and Textile Groups, and a high proportion in 1969 in the separate Knitwear group. Textile and clothing were also areas in open employment with 'a long tradition of "women's work"'.<sup>72</sup> Although they still remained predominantly male, such areas were clearly considered as particularly suitable for women workers. It appears that Remploy's Homework Scheme was also considered particularly applicable for women. As Holloway and Lewis have noted, this was also the case for women in open employment.<sup>73</sup> In Remploy, homework was a very limited scheme where a local factory could take on a small number of 'homeworkers' who, unable to come to the factory, would do specific tasks at home, under regular monitoring from a Homework Organiser at the local factory. When initially discussing the scheme, the Remploy Chairman suggested 'that women are better suited than men', whilst another member agreed 'that it was a woman's job'.<sup>74</sup> Reflecting traditional male and female roles, the implication in this was that men belonged in the factory and women in the home. To

<sup>72</sup> Crompton and Sanderson, *Gendered Jobs & Social Change*, p. 59.

<sup>73</sup> Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, p. 186; Lewis, *Women in England 1870-1950*, p. 186.

<sup>74</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Twentieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (25.03.1947).

reflect this focus upon women in this area, the Homework scheme was initially conducted in cooperation with the Women's Voluntary Service.<sup>75</sup> This belief in the particular relevance of the scheme for women also extended to supervisory roles, with both homework supervisor positions and the Homework Organiser position awarded to women.<sup>76</sup> Such was the association with the Homework Scheme and women, that when a new female member of the Board, Countess Rosebery, first joined, the Chairman expressed his keenness for her to meet the Homework Organiser and discuss the scheme.<sup>77</sup> It appears this association remained unchanged as in 1979 when considering the constitution of the Hailey Working Party which was formed to discuss company policy, it was suggested by the Managing Director that it include 'one Home Work Organiser to ensure, in particular, that we do not neglect the female point of view'.<sup>78</sup>

As well as the negative connotations generally understood as associated with 'women's work' in employment in the period generally, there was a 'significant exception' in that women were expected to be able to demonstrate superior dexterity 'because of their smaller "nimble fingers"'.<sup>79</sup> This also appears to have been reflected in Remploy. It was noted in the report of the Organisation and Methods Division of the Treasury on Remploy in 1955 that the 'lighter packing work' in the Packaging Group of the company was 'very suitable for disabled women'.<sup>80</sup> Disabled men, it

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<sup>75</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (29.10.1947); 'Minutes of the Twenty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors' (25.11.1947); 'Minutes of the Twenty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (30.12.1947).

<sup>76</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (29.10.1947); 'Minutes of the Twenty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (30.12.1947).

<sup>77</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Forty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (25.05.1949).

<sup>78</sup> TNA BM 3/72, 'Note from Mr. T.B. Owen to Sir Denis Barnes' (27.11.1979).

<sup>79</sup> Wilson, 'Gender: Change and Continuity', pp. 247-8.

<sup>80</sup> TNA BM 10/12, 'Report of a Survey undertaken by the Organisation and Methods Division of H.M. Treasury' (1955).

was explained, 'seldom have the dexterity to reach speeds comparable with those of women'.<sup>81</sup> A similar remark was made by a survey carried out in the same year by the MOL, which noted of the Packaging Group that work at the Sheffield factory included 'covering very small cardboard boxes (similar to a fountain pen box) with a glazed paper covering', which was described as 'a job suitable for female labour only'.<sup>82</sup>

With certain jobs being seen as only suitable for women, the limited availability of women candidates could prove problematic. This has been noted as an issue in post-war employment generally with certain 'female roles' struggling to be filled.<sup>83</sup> In the case of Remploy, it was noted by the Park Royal factory in 1955 that despite the work being considered particularly suitable for women, the factory had none employed because 'there were no suitable disabled women on the Ministry of Labour's Section II register who could be taken into the factory'.<sup>84</sup> The following year saw the same issue arise with a factory having to engage in lengthy discussion with the local Labour Exchange to find four suitable women to fill the available roles.<sup>85</sup> A similar problem later placed a knitwear sponsorship scheme in jeopardy as 'more women were needed' yet 'difficulty was being experienced in finding suitable new female labour'.<sup>86</sup> Throughout the period in question therefore, in Remploy, as in employment more generally, there remained a clear association with particular trades and roles as being either particularly suitable for men or for women.

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> TNA BM 10/19, MOL, 'Fact Finding of Typical Remploy Factories by Messrs. Parry and Critchley' (1955), p. 18.

<sup>83</sup> Bradley, *Men's Work, Women's Work*, p. 142.

<sup>84</sup> TNA BM 10/12, 'Report of a Survey undertaken by the Organisation and Methods Division of H.M. Treasury' (1955).

<sup>85</sup> TNA LAB 20/929, Remploy Limited, 'Note from Sir Brunel Cohen' (27.03.1956).

<sup>86</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (18.12.1957).

Such segregation was never absolute, however. As Tables 5.5 and 5.6 show, there were always more men than women working in each Trade Group, including those traditionally associated with ‘women’s work’.<sup>87</sup> Even in the case of those trades considered ‘man’s work’, there were exceptions which appear to have been unavoidable due to the particular nature of Remploy. Tables 5.5 and 5.6 show both the Furniture Group and the Engineering Group did include female workers, even though these numbers were small. There are a number of specific examples of this at the factory level. In 1964, for example, the engineering factory in Birmingham performed work for the motor industry and had 172 disabled employees, a quarter of whom were women.<sup>88</sup> Another engineering factory at Merthyr included at least one woman on the production floor.<sup>89</sup> Similarly, the Denton furniture factory had 100 disabled employees including four women, while the largest furniture factory in Hull also had a number of female workers.<sup>90</sup> In 1976 the Neath engineering factory which engaged in ‘metal welding and cutting’ had six female employees engaged in this work.<sup>91</sup>

It is likely a case of it proving unavoidable to completely segregate this kind of work. As Chapter Four has shown, Remploy’s recruitment was based upon locating workers in the factory locality and was primarily decided upon a measure of productivity. Whilst factory managers could select potential employees, and therefore could in theory select only men, the presence of some female workers suggests that this was either not desirable or not practical. While men may have been considered the most

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<sup>87</sup> TNA BM 10/12, ‘Report of a Survey undertaken by the Organisation and Methods Division of H.M. Treasury’ (1955).

<sup>88</sup> TNA BM 6/10, *Remploy News*, 62 (Summer, 1964).

<sup>89</sup> TNA BM 6/10, *Remploy News*, 64 (Winter, 1964-65).

<sup>90</sup> TNA BM 6/10, *Remploy News*, 63 (Autumn, 1964); TNA BM 6/15, *Remploy News*, 81 (Spring, 1969).

<sup>91</sup> *Remploy News*, 112 (November, 1976).

suitable for certain trades, the question of an individual's potential productivity could perhaps trump such concerns. Given the choice between a less productive male employee and a more productive female one, it appears that managers were prepared to bend the notion of traditional male and female trades. In this way it is possible that the question of disability proved more important than traditional gender roles as the assumption of male physical superiority in production broke down. It is also a question of how Remploy operated, with factories occasionally having to change trade to ensure a steady flow of work. In such cases female workers could not be laid-off or transferred to another factory if the trade was considered 'man's work'. One such example is provided in the employee profile of a female worker from the Kidbrooke Factory in the annual company review of 1965.<sup>92</sup> This described how the worker started when the factory was part of the Knitwear Group but since that time the factory had changed production and now manufactured spectacle frames instead.<sup>93</sup> The Homework Scheme also proved different in reality from the perception that it was primarily a scheme for women. It was noted in 1955 that demand for a place on the scheme was outpacing what was available and therefore preference was being given to those termed 'breadwinners', who supported a family with their wage, and 'to men over women'.<sup>94</sup> By 1961 therefore, there were in reality more men than women employed as 'homeworkers', with 105 men and eighty-six women then enrolled.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> TNA T224/1891, 'Remploy Annual Review for 1965'.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> TNA BM 10/12, 'Report of a Survey undertaken by the Organisation and Methods Division of H.M. Treasury' (1955).

<sup>95</sup> TNA LAB 20/1035, Remploy Limited, 'Strength State – Section II Disabled Period Ended 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1961' (27.01.1961).

Furthermore, while some real segregation clearly existed in the Furniture and Engineering Groups, this still left the majority of factories in the other trade groups with a mixture of male and female employees. Tables 5.5 and 5.6 show a significant gender mix in the Packaging and Assembly Group, the largest group in terms of employee numbers, the Leather and Textiles Group, and the Knitwear Group.<sup>96</sup> As with much of Remploy, the numbers of female workers within a factory would vary greatly across localities. Though there is no extant breakdown of the numbers of female workers on a factory-by-factory basis for the whole company, there are some useful indications of the kind of variance that existed. In 1953 the St Helens factory employed forty-eight disabled workers, of whom sixteen were women.<sup>97</sup> In 1956 the factory in Barrow-in-Furness had sixty-two disabled workers of whom nine were female, while the Aberdeen factory had thirty-six employees of whom thirteen were female.<sup>98</sup> The following year, the Southampton factory claimed forty-seven employees of whom nineteen were women.<sup>99</sup> In 1975 the Cowdenbeath factory in Scotland employed ninety disabled people, half of who were women.<sup>100</sup> The proportions in the factories in Wales in Table 5.7 provide a useful example of these kinds of variations, showing that out of fourteen factories, half were exclusively male. The factory at Bridgend included only eleven female workers, less than ten per cent of its workforce, whereas the Ystradgynlais factory included thirty-two women, representing a little over forty per cent of its total employees.

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<sup>96</sup> TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979).

<sup>97</sup> *Remploy News*, 9 (August, 1953).

<sup>98</sup> TNA BM 6/2, *Remploy News*, 32 (August, 1956); *Remploy News*, 30 (January, 1956).

<sup>99</sup> Mr. Carr and Dr. King, *Hansard* (12.02.1957), vol. 564 cc.159w.

<sup>100</sup> *Remploy News*, 103 (July, 1975).



The evidence suggests that in those instances where men and women worked in the same Remploy factory, little segregation within the factory itself existed, with men and women working together representing a normal state of affairs within the company. An article in the *Sunday Dispatch* in February 1959 reporting on Remploy described how men and women ‘all work together’.<sup>101</sup> This is also apparent in reports in the company newsletter *Remploy News* which was produced regularly from 1952. In many issues there were numerous pictures and reports of factories with men and women working side-by-side on the factory floor and seemingly on the same kind of job.<sup>102</sup> We can also find similar examples in the published end of year reports for the company which regularly featured pictures of men and women working together.<sup>103</sup> This appears to have been unusual compared to open industry where, as well as the segregation in terms of jobs for men and women, there was also segregation in terms of processes and space within jobs.<sup>104</sup> That the evidence suggests that both male and female disabled workers were in some cases doing the same process in the same space is therefore notable as a particular feature of sheltered employment.

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<sup>101</sup> TNA BM 8/9, ‘They said Bill would never walk’, *Sunday Dispatch* (15.02.1959).

<sup>102</sup> *Remploy News*, 9 (August, 1953); *Remploy News*, 18 (May, 1954); *Remploy News*, 24 (November, 1954). TNA BM 6/2, *Remploy News*, 30 (January, 1956); *Remploy News*, 32 (July, 1956); TNA BM 6/4, *Remploy News*, 40 (Winter, 1958); TNA BM 6/6, *Remploy News*, 47 (Autumn, 1960); *Remploy News*, 48 (Winter, 1960); TNA BM 6/7, *Remploy News*, 49 (Spring, 1961); *Remploy News*, 51 (Autumn, 1961); *Remploy News*, 52 (Winter, 1961-2); TNA BM 6/10, *Remploy News*, 61 (Spring, 1964); *Remploy News*, 62 (Summer, 1964); *Remploy News*, 63 (Autumn, 1964); *Remploy News*, 64 (Winter, 1964-5); TNA BM 6/11, *Remploy News*, 65 (Spring, 1965); TNA BM 6/12, *Remploy News*, 69 (Spring / Summer, 1966); *Remploy News*, 70 (Autumn, 1966); TNA BM 6/13, *Remploy News*, 72 (Spring, 1967); *Remploy News*, 73 (Summer, 1967); TNA BM 6/14, *Remploy News*, 79 (Autumn, 1968); TNA BM 6/15, *Remploy News*, 82 (Autumn, 1969); TNA BM 6/16, *Remploy News*, 84 (Summer, 1970); *Remploy News*, 85 (Winter, 1970-1); TNA BM 6/17, *Remploy News*, 87 (Summer, 1971); TNA BM 6/18, *Remploy News*, 88 (Autumn, 1971); *Remploy News*, 88 (February, 1972); TNA BM 6/20, *Remploy News*, 95 (February, 1974); *Remploy News*, 97 (July, 1974); *Remploy News*, 98 (September, 1974). *Remploy News*, 101 (February, 1975); *Remploy News*, 102 (April, 1975); *Remploy News*, 103 (June, 1975); *Remploy News*, 104 (August, 1975); *Remploy News*, 107 (January, 1976); *Remploy News*, 108 (March, 1976); *Remploy News*, 110 (July, 1976); *Remploy News*, 114 (March, 1977); *Remploy News*, 115 (May, 1977); *Remploy News*, 117 (September, 1977); *Remploy News*, 120 (February, 1978); *Remploy News*, 122 (June, 1978); *Remploy News*, 125 (December, 1978).

<sup>103</sup> TNA T227/1106, ‘Remploy Annual Review for 1959’; TNA T222/1085, ‘Remploy Annual Review for 1956’; TNA T224/1891, ‘Remploy Annual Review for 1964’; ‘Remploy Annual Review for 1966’; ‘Remploy Annual Review for 1967’; ‘Remploy Annual Review for 1968’.

<sup>104</sup> Lewis, *Women in Britain since 1945*, p. 78; Bradley, *Men’s Work, Women’s Work*, p. 116.

**Table 5.7: Numbers of Men and Women Employed in Remploy Factories in Wales, 1972.**

Remploy Factories in Wales	Employees	
	Men	Women
Location of Factory		
Abertillery	57	15
Blackwood	48	7
Bridgend	118	11
Brynamman	58	0
Merthyr (Engineering)	73	0
Merthyr (Leather/Textile)	31	2
Neath	66	0
Pentre	56	0
Porth	80	18
Swansea	104	0
Tonyrefail	62	0
Treforest	142	4
Wrexham	76	0
Ystradgynlais	47	32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>89</b>

Source: Government Answer, *Hansard* (12.05.1972), vol. 836, cc. 446-7W.

It is also important to consider what segregation existed outside of work in the factory. Anderson noted the importance of the development of social activities for those disabled during the Second World War in rehabilitation centres such as Stoke Mandeville, saying these were specifically organised ‘in such a way as to put meaning and purpose into life’.<sup>105</sup> In Remploy this was not officially organised, but it was encouraged through the formation of ‘Social and Welfare Clubs’ created and managed by the workers themselves at the factory level. The social function of the factory, whilst secondary to its primary role, was nevertheless considered important by Remploy’s senior management in helping to foster a ‘community spirit’ in the

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<sup>105</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 138.

company.<sup>106</sup> The setting up of ‘social clubs’ designed primarily ‘to provide all employees with social benefits and entertainment’, was therefore encouraged.<sup>107</sup> Most factories appear to have had such clubs and held various social events, such as parties, dances, outings, and even holidays, throughout the year.<sup>108</sup> Reports of these events featured regularly in issues of *Remploy News* throughout the period in question.<sup>109</sup>

In terms of sports and games, there are numerous references in *Remploy News* to various clubs and leagues with friendly competitions between different factories.<sup>110</sup> The majority of mentions of the activities of these clubs revolve around popular games such as snooker, darts, table tennis and dominoes.<sup>111</sup> There are also occasional references to other sports such as the mention of a cricket tournament between factories in 1953, a feature on an Archery club the following year nicknamed the ‘Remploy Robin Hoods’, a football club, and a fishing club.<sup>112</sup> The post-war period saw the growth of organised sports for disabled people and it is apparent that sport in Remploy was part of this trend.<sup>113</sup> It is noticeable that in the vast majority of reports on the activities of these clubs, whether in terms of which employees were organising them, or of winners of the various inter-factory tournaments, there is only mention of men. There is no mention of any women employees taking part. The first exception to this does not appear until the Summer issue of 1963 which reported on the first large-

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<sup>106</sup> TNA BM 10/19, MOL, ‘Fact Finding of Typical Remploy Factories by Messrs. Parry and Critchley’ (1955), p. 10.

<sup>107</sup> *Remploy News*, 1 (December, 1952).

<sup>108</sup> TNA BM 10/19, MOL, ‘Fact Finding of Typical Remploy Factories by Messrs. Parry and Critchley’ (1955), p. 10.

<sup>109</sup> The first issue of *Remploy News*, 1 (December, 1952) included a section on ‘Welfare & Social News’ and encouraged employees to keep the publication informed of events at their factory. This remained a staple feature of *Remploy News* throughout the period.

<sup>110</sup> See *Remploy News* issues in TNA BM 6.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> *Remploy News*, 9 (August, 1953); *Remploy News*, 12 (November, 1953); *Remploy News*, 21 (August, 1954); *Remploy News*, 22 (September, 1954); *Remploy News*, 24 (November, 1954); TNA BM 6/4, *Remploy News*, 40 (Winter, 1958).

<sup>113</sup> R. Holt and T. Mason, *Sport in Britain 1945-2000* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2000), pp. 15-7.

scale ‘Remploy Rally’ where over 2,000 people from thirty factories gathered for a day of sport and games at Woburn Abbey.<sup>114</sup> This report made reference to women employees taking part in an invalid tricycle rally race.<sup>115</sup> The following issue noted that a further race had been held by the Wakefield factory, again with women employees referenced in the results.<sup>116</sup> The end of the year brought mention of women as winners in the Aberdeen factory games day and as winners in a table tennis contest.<sup>117</sup> These are the only references made. Such evidence is, of course, hardly conclusive. It may be that the emphasis on ‘pub games’ in social clubs excluded some women, with gender segregation in pubs remaining relatively common for most of the period in question.<sup>118</sup> Similarly, it may be that the general trend noted by Martin Francis and Richard Holt of low female participation in sport in the 1940s and 1950s, which slowly changed during the 1960s, may also have been reflected in Remploy.<sup>119</sup> As Francis argues such generalisations tend to obscure a range of experiences for women.<sup>120</sup> What is readily apparent however, is that the range of social events organised by the factories beyond sports and games had always involved both men and women. Reports and accompanying pictures indicate that events such as parties, dances and outings featured male and female employees mixing together.<sup>121</sup> From these pictures and reports it is clear that these social activities provided by the

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<sup>114</sup> TNA BM 6/9, *Remploy News*, 58 (Summer, 1963).

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> TNA BM 6/9, *Remploy News*, 59 (Autumn, 1963).

<sup>117</sup> TNA BM 6/9, *Remploy News*, 60 (Winter, 1963-64).

<sup>118</sup> M. Francis, ‘Leisure and Popular Culture’, in I. Zweiniger-Bargielowska (ed.), *Women in Twentieth-Century Britain* (London, Routledge, 2014), p. 236.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 230-7; R. Holt, ‘Sport and Recreation’, in P. Addison and H. Jones (eds.) *A Companion to Contemporary Britain 1939-2000* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2005), p. 113.

<sup>120</sup> Francis, ‘Leisure and Popular Culture’, p. 236.

<sup>121</sup> Numerous reports in *Remploy News* throughout period, for example: *Remploy News*, 1 (December, 1952); *Remploy News*, 9 (August, 1953). TNA BM 6/7, *Remploy News*, 51 (Autumn, 1961); TNA BM 6/11, *Remploy News*, 66 (Summer, 1965); *Remploy News*, 67 (Autumn, 1965); TNA BM 6/12, *Remploy News*, 71 (Winter 1966-7); TNA BM 6/15, *Remploy News*, 80 (Winter, 1968-9); TNA BM 6/16, *Remploy News*, 84 (Summer, 1970); TNA BM 6/19, *Remploy News*, 93 (August, 1973). *Remploy News*, 108 (March, 1976).

factories offered opportunities for men and women to mix socially. Something which otherwise may have been difficult for the severely disabled employees.

A further testament to the lack of segregation in many of the Remploy factories, and the socialising which took place, was the frequency of marriages between disabled employees. Again these were a notably common feature in issues of *Remploy News* throughout the period. The first report of such a wedding occurred in the July 1953 issue of *Remploy News* (the first issue came out in December 1952), with two disabled employees of the Coventry factory having been married the previous month.<sup>122</sup> From this point onwards there were regular reports of weddings between disabled employees.<sup>123</sup> The Winter issue for 1958 noted that the Southampton factory had the highest proportion of women to men of any Remploy factory and thus ‘it is not surprising to learn that the incidence of marriages between employees is also high. The factory is preparing to celebrate two weddings which are to take place at Christmas and in the spring’.<sup>124</sup> This issue also included an article which posed the question ‘Who is leading in the Remploy Marriages Stakes?’, noting that the Bristol

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<sup>122</sup> *Remploy News*, 8 (July, 1953).

<sup>123</sup> Numerous reports in *Remploy News* throughout period, for example: *Remploy News*, 8 (July, 1953); TNA BM 6/5, *Remploy News*, 42 (Summer, 1959); *Remploy News*, 44 (Winter, 1959); TNA BM 6/6, *Remploy News*, 46 (Summer, 1960); *Remploy News*, 47 (Autumn, 1960); *Remploy News*, 48 (Winter, 1960); TNA BM 6/7, *Remploy News*, 51 (Autumn, 1961); TNA BM 6/8, *Remploy News*, 55 (Autumn, 1962); *Remploy News*, 56 (Winter, 1962-3); TNA BM 6/9, *Remploy News*, 58 (Summer, 1963); TNA BM 6/10, *Remploy News*, 61 (Spring, 1964); *Remploy News*, 62 (Summer, 1964); *Remploy News*, 63 (Autumn, 1964); TNA BM 6/12, *Remploy News*, 69 (Spring /Summer, 1966); *Remploy News*, 70 (Autumn, 1966); TNA BM 6/13, *Remploy News*, 74 (Autumn, 1967); *Remploy News*, 75 (Winter, 1967-8); TNA BM 6/14, *Remploy News*, 76 (Spring, 1968); TNA BM 6/15, *Remploy News*, 80 (Winter, 1968-9); *Remploy News*, 81 (Spring, 1969); TNA BM 6/16, *Remploy News*, 84 (Summer, 1970); TNA BM 6/17, *Remploy News*, 86 (Spring, 1971); *Remploy News*, 87 (Summer, 1971); TNA BM 6/18, *Remploy News*, 88 (Autumn, 1971); *Remploy News*, 88 (02. 1972); *Remploy News*, 90 (11.1972); *Remploy News*, 91 (AGM edition, 1972); TNA BM 6/19, *Remploy News*, 94 (December, 1973); TNA BM 6/20, *Remploy News*, 96 (April, 1974); *Remploy News*, 97 (July, 1974); *Remploy News*, 98 (September, 1974); *Remploy News*, 102 (April, 1975); *Remploy News*, 107 (January, 1976); *Remploy News*, 108 (March, 1976); *Remploy News*, 109 (May, 1976); *Remploy News*, 110 (July, 1976); *Remploy News*, 111 (September, 1976); *Remploy News*, 113 (January, 1977); *Remploy News*, 118 (November, 1977); *Remploy News*, 121 (April, 1978); *Remploy News*, 122 (June, 1978); *Remploy News*, 123 (August, 1978); *Remploy News*, 128 (June, 1979); *Remploy News*, 129 (August, 1979); *Remploy News*, 130 (October, 1979).

<sup>124</sup> TNA BM 6/4, *Remploy News*, 40 (Winter, 1958).

factory had laid claim to ‘the record for the greatest number of marriages between employees’.<sup>125</sup> The factory had recently had ‘a wedding a month’ for three months and ‘in the past seven years we have had a total of eight marriages’.<sup>126</sup> The Winter issue of 1960 noted that the Abertillery factory had had seven marriages since it opened in 1949 and the Wigan factory had had four.<sup>127</sup> Significantly, in a number of cases it was noted that the couple met working side-by-side on the factory floor and occasionally reports included photographs showing the couple at work close to each other.<sup>128</sup> Thus, for example, of a wedding at the Cleator Moor Factory in 1966 it was noted that the couple both worked ‘on leathersgoods production’.<sup>129</sup> Similarly in a report of a wedding in 1968 at the Lydney factory, the couple were both ‘trained as pitch-set brush makers but are now engaged on packaging work’.<sup>130</sup> In the report of a wedding at the Abertillery factory in 1974 it was noted that the wife ‘started work at a sewing machine in the next row to his – and they fell in love’.<sup>131</sup> In the same year a report featured a young couple, both twenty years old who had met working as sewing machinists at the Dundee factory.<sup>132</sup>

In terms of segregation in Remploy we therefore see something of a mixed picture. There was clearly some segregation, with some trades considered as work particularly suitable for men or for women. This was never absolute, however, with instances of women on ‘men’s work’ and men on ‘women’s work’. This appears to

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> TNA BM 6/13, *Remploy News*, 75 (Winter, 1967-8), notes a wedding at York where both worked on the knitting machines. *Remploy News*, 130 (October, 1979).notes that of a wedding at the Abertillery factory both bride and groom were machinists. For pictures see TNA BM 6/10, *Remploy News*, 61 (Spring, 1964); TNA BM 6/18, *Remploy News*, 88 (Autumn, 1971); TNA BM 6/20, *Remploy News*, 98 (September, 1974).

<sup>129</sup> TNA BM 6/12, *Remploy News*, 70 (Autumn, 1966).

<sup>130</sup> TNA BM 6/14, *Remploy News*, 76 (Spring, 1968).

<sup>131</sup> TNA BM 6/20, *Remploy News*, 96 (April, 1974).

<sup>132</sup> TNA BM 6/20, *Remploy News*, 97 (July, 1974).

have been due to the practicalities of Remploy's operation which made full segregation impossible. As with so much of Remploy the gender mix would vary from factory to factory. One might find oneself working in an entirely male environment in one factory, and in a much closer gender mix in another. In the case of the latter, which represented a significant number of factories, there is little evidence of segregation on the factory floor. Men and women appear to have worked side-by-side on the same job and also socialised outside of work as well. In this way it would appear that the nature of the employees as 'disabled' trumped the traditional gender segregation in employment to a certain degree. This does not, of course, mean that true gender equality existed, and it is to the question of the status of women employees in Remploy that this chapter will now turn.

### Status of Women in Remploy: Wages

There is broad agreement from historians that the position of women in employment during the post-war period considered here was characterised by its inferior status to that of men.<sup>133</sup> This manifested most notably in terms of wages, with women paid significantly less than men.<sup>134</sup> The case of wages paid to disabled women has not yet been examined, and this chapter represents the first attempt to do so. The question of equal pay for men and women had long been considered in Britain, with the Second World War adding a fresh urgency.<sup>135</sup> The resulting Report of the Royal Commission on Equal Pay, published in 1946, highlighted the scope of the problem of differing

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<sup>133</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 42-3; Laybourn, *Unemployment and Employment Policies Concerning Women in Britain*, p. 187; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, pp. 99-119; Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War*; Glucksmann, *Women Assemble*, p. 281; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 119-122; Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, p. 186; Thane, 'Towards Equal Opportunities?', p. 184.

<sup>134</sup> Laybourn, *Unemployment and Employment Policies Concerning Women in Britain*, p. 187; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, pp. 99, 119; Glucksmann, *Women Assemble*, p. 281; Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, pp. 162-78; Thane, 'Towards Equal Opportunities?', p. 184.

<sup>135</sup> Thane, 'Towards Equal Opportunities?', p. 184; Wilson, *Women and the Welfare State*, pp. 131-2.

wage levels while offering little in the form of solutions.<sup>136</sup> Thane has suggested that by 1946 there was already ‘a broad consensus that equal pay was desirable’, but disagreements over its precise terms meant ‘no one in a position of power was in any hurry to do anything about it’.<sup>137</sup> Despite the post-war labour shortage leaving some industries with no choice but to offer higher-wages to attract women, separate wage rates remained intact.<sup>138</sup> It would take until the 1970s and the passing of the Equal Pay Act for equality in pay for men and women to even begin to develop in industry.

In the case of Remploy, differing wages for men and women were also the norm until the passing of the Equal Pay Act. Initially, wages for women followed the same formula as those for men, with wage bandings related to trade rates in ‘outside’ industry, modified to reflect the reduced productivity of the disabled workforce.<sup>139</sup> This involved three wage bandings. An ‘A’ rate for those deemed fully competent at the full trade rate, a ‘B’ rate for those who had completed training but not yet become productive enough to earn the higher rate, set at eighty per cent of the full trade rate, and a ‘C’ rate during the period of training which was set at seventy per cent of the full trade rate.<sup>140</sup> As such, for female employees the wage formula was to be the same matched to the trade rate for women where this existed.<sup>141</sup> This formula itself was soon to change, both as a result of pressure from Trade Unions to increase wages for Remploy workers, and from the difficulty in paying wages based on a trade rate when

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<sup>136</sup> Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, pp. 119-20; Thane, ‘Towards Equal Opportunities?’, pp. 185-6.

<sup>137</sup> Thane, ‘Towards Equal Opportunities?’, p. 191.

<sup>138</sup> C. Wightman, *More than Munitions: Women, Work and the Engineering Industries 1900-1950* (Harlow, Longman, 1999), pp. 173-85.

<sup>139</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, ‘Note to Mr. Hughes’ (31.05.1946).

<sup>140</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, ‘Note from Mr. Hughes to Mr. Goldberg’ (09.04.1946).

<sup>141</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, ‘Note to Mr. Hughes’ (31.05.1946).



most factories were engaged in multiple trades.<sup>142</sup> The result was the adoption of a standard 'Remploy' wage rate regardless of trade established in 1951.<sup>143</sup> During the discussion which led to this, the possibility of 'a common rate for both sexes', was briefly raised by the MOL for the Remploy Board to consider.<sup>144</sup> The minutes of the relevant Board meeting made reference to discussions having taken place regarding the MOL's suggestions, but made no specific mention of gender differentiation being abolished.<sup>145</sup> In any case it was decided that the women's rate would be set at eighty per cent of the men's.<sup>146</sup> In addition, a minimum level of pay for women was set at '1/7d. per hour', rising to '1/10d. per hour' after two years service, which similarly reflected eighty per cent of the minimum level for men.<sup>147</sup> Wage rates continued to rise over the 1950s, but always within this same overall formula.<sup>148</sup>

A further agreement between the Trade Unions and Remploy in 1960 saw a new wage settlement reached which retained the same formula of eighty per cent of the man's rate for women.<sup>149</sup> However, this settlement included a wage increase for men after a period of six months, another after one year and further increase after two years, whereas for women it was increased only after a period of one year and then again

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<sup>142</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, 'Note from Mr. Maher to Mr. Mitchell' (13.02.1951); TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 37.

<sup>143</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 37.

<sup>144</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, 'Note from Mr. Slater to Mr. Hinton' (24.01.1951).

<sup>145</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Sixty-first Meeting of the Board of Directors' (31.01.1951).

<sup>146</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, 'Note from Mr. Maher to Mr. Mitchell' (13.02.1951); TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Sixty-third Meeting of the Board of Directors' (28.03.1951).

<sup>147</sup> TNA BM 8/18, Remploy Limited, 'Executive Director Report no. 116: Appendix D: Disabled Employees Wage Rates' (11.04.1956).

<sup>148</sup> TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, 'Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain' (February, 1958), p. 10; TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 37; TNA BM 8/18, Remploy Limited, 'Executive Director Report no. 116: Appendix D: Disabled Employees Wage Rates' (11.04.1956); TNA LAB 20/1054, Remploy Limited, 'Managing Director Report 85: Appendix G: Disabled Employees Wage Rate' (09.03.1960).

<sup>149</sup> TNA LAB 20/1054, 'Remploy Limited: Remploy Wages Agreement' (03.02.1960).

after two years.<sup>150</sup> Further wage increases and settlements throughout the 1960s kept this formula. Women workers in Remploy were therefore paid less for their work in terms of the standard wage and this gap was further extended in terms of estimated average gross earnings when bonuses and overtime, also set differently for women, were taken into account.<sup>151</sup> In October 1969 these average gross earnings were calculated at '£13.10.10' per week for men and '£9.15.0' per week for women.<sup>152</sup>

In determining these wage rates, the overall guiding principles were to keep Remploy as close to conditions in outside industry as possible and avoid any case of wage rates within the company being higher. This was the case from the very beginning, with the MOL emphasising to Remploy in 1947, during discussion of how to set the wages for women, that it was 'undesirable to exceed in any case the agreed trade rates'.<sup>153</sup> Instructions for wage rates circulated within Remploy stressed that neither men nor women should receive wages which exceeded the full trade rate.<sup>154</sup> So while there can be no doubt that women received lower wages than men, this was, at this point, related to a belief that it was not appropriate to have wages be more than in outside industry.<sup>155</sup> We see this again in discussion of the 1951 standard wage rate. In raising the possibility of common rate for men and women, the MOL noted that differentials were 'the general practice of industry'.<sup>156</sup> In terms of the level of wage differential, the original Trade Union proposals had called for a women's rate of ninety per cent of

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> TNA BM 5/1, 'Remploy Wages Agreement' (1974).

<sup>152</sup> TNA LAB 20/1173, 'Managing Director Report 165: Personnel Director Report' (June, 1967); TNA BM 8/51, 'Managing Director Report 190: Personnel Director Report' (October, 1969).

<sup>153</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, 'Note from Colonel Robertson to Mr Hughes' (25.03.1947). See also discussion among MOL officials, TNA LAB 20/200, 'Note by Mr. Lodge' (30.01.1947).

<sup>154</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'General Circular No. 39: Disabled Employees - Rates of Wages' (08.05.1947).

<sup>155</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, 'Note from Colonel Robertson to Mr Hughes' (25.03.1947). See also discussion among MOL officials, TNA LAB 20/200, 'Note by Mr. Lodge' (30.01.1947).

<sup>156</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, 'Note from Mr. Slater to Mr. Hinton' (24.01.1951).

the male rate.<sup>157</sup> This was considered ‘too high’ by both Rempoy and the MOL which seems to have been again based on it being too different from the differential in wages in open industry.<sup>158</sup> The MOL suggested that a figure of seventy per cent of the male rate would actually reflect the outside situation better.<sup>159</sup> In the end the Rempoy Board settled on the compromise figure of eighty per cent.<sup>160</sup>

This principle again guided the 1960 settlement. In terms of wages it was made clear in the agreement that the new wage rates were ‘subject to the condition that no employee’s wage rate is to increase beyond the appropriate district trade rate’.<sup>161</sup> The principle also played a key role soon after, when an increase in the Index of Retail Prices and in the National Index of Wage Rates, led the unions involved to call for a general wage increase in Rempoy.<sup>162</sup> At a meeting between Rempoy and the unions, to discuss the new wage claim, the union representatives asked for a five per cent increase to wages.<sup>163</sup> After discussion, the Rempoy representatives proposed an increase of four per cent, which would represent ‘an increase of 1½d. per hour for men and 1½d. per hour for women’.<sup>164</sup> The union representatives replied that ‘the rates paid to disabled women employed by Rempoy were already much nearer to the normal trade rates than those paid to disabled men and asked as an alternative that consideration be given to an increase of 2d. for men and 1d. for women’.<sup>165</sup> This was put to the Board to approve, with only Dame Florence Hancock, the lone female

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<sup>157</sup> TNA LAB20/200, ‘Note by Mr. Slater’ (29.12.1950).

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.; TNA LAB 20/200, ‘Note from Mr. Maher to Mr. Mitchell’ (13.02.1951).

<sup>159</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, ‘Note by Mr. Maher’ (15.01.1951).

<sup>160</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, ‘Note from Mr. Maher to Mr. Mitchell’ (13.02.1951); TNA BM 8/2, Rempoy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Sixty-third Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (28.03.1951).

<sup>161</sup> TNA LAB 20/1054, Rempoy Limited, ‘Rempoy Wages Agreement’ (03.02.1960).

<sup>162</sup> TNA LAB 20/1054, Rempoy Limited, ‘Wage Rate – Disabled Employees’ (07.03.1961).

<sup>163</sup> TNA LAB 20/1054, Rempoy Limited, ‘Notes of meeting concerning claim for increase in the basic wage rates of disabled employees’ (07.03.1961).

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> TNA LAB 20/1054, Rempoy Limited, ‘Notes of meeting concerning claim for increase in the basic wage rates of disabled employees’ (07.03.1961).

Board member at this time and former Trade Union leader who had long campaigned for improvements in working conditions for women, dissenting, saying ‘that she felt that she could not agree to the proposed award as it inferred that the women were to receive only 50% of the increase awarded to the men and her disagreement was a matter of principle’.<sup>166</sup> In discussions between the MOL and the Treasury on the proposed increase, the issue of how the wages matched with those in outside industry was again the focus.<sup>167</sup> It was agreed by the MOL, the Treasury and Remploy to grant the increase on the lines proposed, with a 2d. increase for men and 1d. increase for women.<sup>168</sup> Here we see again that the link to ‘normal’ trade rates was the goal and in this case it led to a lower rate for women than had been initially proposed by Remploy.

It is worth noting that the rate of pay for women does indeed at this point appear to have been closer to the average in ‘outside’ industry than that of men. For October 1964, for example, the average weekly earnings in Remploy for men were ‘£10.2.6’, and the average for all manufacturing industries was ‘£18.13.4’, whereas for women the Remploy average was ‘£7.5.0’ compared to ‘£8.18.11’ in outside industry.<sup>169</sup> This point was later raised in 1967 by the Financial Director of Remploy when Dame Florence’s successor on the Board, Mrs Marie Patterson, who also had a background

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<sup>166</sup> TNA BM 8/3, Remploy Limited: ‘Minutes of the One Hundred and Seventy-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (15.03.1961). J. Hannam, ‘Hancock [married name Donovan], Dame Florence May (1893–1974), trade union leader’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (06.01.2011), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-31193> (accessed 17/08/2018).

<sup>167</sup> TNA LAB 20/1054, ‘Note from S.H. Wright to A.A. D’encer’ (22.03.1961).

<sup>168</sup> TNA LAB 20/1054, ‘Note from A.A. D’encer to S.H. Wright’ (20.03.1961); ‘Note from S.H. Wright to A.A. D’encer’ (22.03.1961); ‘Note from Mr. Molloy to Mr Pointon’ (27.03.1961). The new wage rate was 3/6 ½ d. starting for men, increasing after 2 years to 3/9d., and for women a starting rate of 2/8 ½ d., increasing after 2 years to 2/10 ½ d., TNA LAB 20/1054, Remploy Limited, ‘Remploy Wages Agreement’ (24.03.1961).

<sup>169</sup> Mr. Marsh, *Hansard* (24.05.1965), vol.713 cc.14w.

as a trade unionist, queried the differentiation in pay, as he noted ‘our wage rates for females were very close to those in outside industry’.<sup>170</sup> The existence of a wage differential in Remploy was therefore explicitly related to its existence in outside industry.

Given the specific circumstances of Remploy, however, this wish to emulate outside industry was not always possible, resulting in a number of anomalies in the wage rates for women when the principle was put into practice. Upon the creation of Remploy, it would appear that the question of what wages to pay female workers was not considered until a late stage in the planning. In early consideration on wage structure between Remploy and the MOL in 1945 we see no mention of how this should be adapted for women, and it appears that this was not considered until the Bridgend factory was on the verge of operating.<sup>171</sup> With the Bridgend factory set to open at the end of April 1946, Remploy contacted the MOL on 9 April in some urgency to confirm the wage rates for women.<sup>172</sup> The MOL response did not come until 31 May, when the factory had been in operation for a month, though with only male employees.<sup>173</sup> Here, the MOL advised Remploy that the wage structure for women should be the same as for men, based on average trade rates for women.<sup>174</sup> However, where such a trade rate did not exist for women there was uncertainty and the MOL requested that Remploy ‘consult us before entering into any commitment in the event of a woman trainee being engaged in an occupation for which no separate women’s rate is recognised locally’, adding, ‘if you have already considered this problem it

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<sup>170</sup> TNA BM 8/3, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Two Hundredth and Forty-Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (21.09.1967).

<sup>171</sup> Discussion was exclusively on wage rates for men, see TNA LAB 20/200.

<sup>172</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, ‘Note from Mr. Hughes to Mr. Goldberg’ (09.04.1946).

<sup>173</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, ‘Note to Mr. Hughes’ (31.05.1946).

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

would be helpful if you could let us have your views'.<sup>175</sup> The case of women was not considered therefore prior to Remploy beginning to operate factories.

Even where the rate did exist the wage formula proved problematic as the realities of using it for employing women became apparent. When interviewing the six women in November 1946 for the leatherwork section of the Bridgend factory, it was noted that two 'were reluctant' to work at the wages proposed.<sup>176</sup> Using the same formula as male wage rates these women would be starting on the 'C' rate of 10d. per hour, seventy per cent of the 1s.2d. which was the skilled female rate for such work.<sup>177</sup> It was noted by Remploy themselves that at this wage rate the women would 'only be about 10/-p.w the better off' through employment in the factory.<sup>178</sup> As a result, 'it was decided to defer their engagement until it could be seen whether they could not be employed in work for which they would receive a higher wage'.<sup>179</sup> There were therefore two women wanting work with the company, but unwilling to do so until a more attractive wage was possible.

This particular local situation provoked an urgent national re-consideration of wage rates for women employees to avoid making employment in a Remploy factory potentially unattractive for women in terms of wages.<sup>180</sup> The issue was raised with the MOL in January 1947 with Remploy noting that until then 'the question of wages to be paid to women disabled employees was left open'.<sup>181</sup> At this point however, as

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Monthly Report on Remploy Factory: Appendix "C" to E.D.R. NO.15' (19.11.1946).

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, 'Note from Mr. Hughes to Colonel Robertson' (06.01.1947).

Remploy explained, there were now two women employed at Bridgend on leatherwork, possibly the same two who had previously deferred.<sup>182</sup> Remploy explained to the MOL that the rate which had been agreed by the National Joint Wages Board for the leather goods trade for women outside London was '1/ 1½d' an hour minimum, and for 'saddlery and harness work', which presumably was being done at the time, had no women's rate listed at all.<sup>183</sup> Remploy explained that 'the former rate is low and it is impossible for us to contemplate paying 70 per cent. and 80 per cent. of it as Rates C and B respectively'.<sup>184</sup> Remploy proposed instead that a new rate for women workers should be set 'for all trades'.<sup>185</sup> This was to be an 'A' rate of 'about 1/10d. an hour', a 'B' rate of '1/5d.' and a 'C' rate of '1/2d.'. <sup>186</sup> The MOL replied in March, remarking that the 'suggested A rate of 1s 10d. per hour for women seems high'.<sup>187</sup> It suggested an alternative rate of 'about 1s. 4½d' in the case of Bridgend, and that in future 'in cases where the A rate fixed by the trade is low it may be desirable to fix the B and C rates at rather higher percentages than 80 and 70 respectively'.<sup>188</sup>

Instructions along these lines were circulated within Remploy, explaining that the same formula for men and women of wages matching the full trade rate, then eighty per cent and seventy per cent of this, was to be used.<sup>189</sup> However, whereas for men

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid.. For deferred women employees see TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Monthly Report on Remploy Factory: Appendix "C" to E.D.R. NO.15' (19.11.1946).

<sup>183</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, 'Note from Mr. Hughes to Colonel Robertson' (06.01.1947).

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, 'Note from Colonel Robertson to Mr Hughes' (25.03.1947).

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'General Circular No. 39: Disabled Employees - Rates of Wages' (08.05.1947).

there was a minimum rate set at '1/9d', this was not the case for women.<sup>190</sup> Here instead, the instruction was that where no separate trade rate existed, or where the rate was 'low', 'full details should be submitted to Head Office in order that consideration may be given to the possibility of fixing 'Rate "C"' at a rather higher percentage than 70'.<sup>191</sup> The principle of relating wages to outside industry was therefore adjusted to mitigate for a wage rate which was considered too low for women workers. This was also the case in the settlement of the standard wage in 1951, with the Board settling for a compromise figure of eighty per cent despite the notification of the MOL that seventy per cent would reflect outside industry better.<sup>192</sup> So while Remploy was trying to mimic 'outside' industry, and adjust for reduced productivity, the realities proved different in a number of ways, including instances which could prove advantageous for their female employees.

The Equal Pay Act of 1970 – the result of long-term pressure from women groups, supportive trade unions and politicians, and short-term pressure by the female Minister of Labour, Barbara Castle, in pushing the measure through before the change of government – allowed for 'equal pay for the same or similar work'.<sup>193</sup> Scholars such as Glennerster and Marwick have pointed out the various loopholes firms could utilise to avoid abiding by the terms of the Act and the limitations of the legislation to really improve women's wages.<sup>194</sup> Similarly, Thane believed the Act had only a

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> TNA LAB 20/200, 'Note by Mr. Maher' (15.01.1951); 'Note from Mr. Maher to Mr. Mitchell' (13.02.1951); TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Sixty-third Meeting of the Board of Directors' (28.03.1951).

<sup>193</sup> Thane, 'Towards Equal Opportunities?', pp. 205-7; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, p. 158; Jones, *The Making of Social Policy in Britain 1830-1990*, p. 168.

<sup>194</sup> Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, pp. 150-1; A. Marwick, *A History of the Modern British Isles 1914-1999* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), pp. 218-9.



limited effect beyond serving as a symbol of intent.<sup>195</sup> Remploy however, likely because of its place as a ‘government company’ – a feature referred to in discussion of the issue in Parliament - did initiate equal pay in line with the terms of the Act.<sup>196</sup> This was phased in over several years with a series of pay increases for women designed for ‘bridging the gap’.<sup>197</sup> By June 1975 the equal wage rate was set.<sup>198</sup> In this way Remploy was used as an example by the government of equal pay having been achieved, with the then Secretary of State for Employment, Michael Foot, who would later become leader of the Labour Party, congratulating Remploy on having administered the policy effectively.<sup>199</sup> The adoption of equal pay in Remploy even led to the wages exceeding the average rate for women in outside industry, something Remploy had always wanted to avoid. As a result of Trade Union pressure to match wage rises in Blind Workshops, an increase was grudgingly awarded which, as was noted at a meeting of the Board, alongside bonus pay meant that the pay for women was then ‘above fit rates’.<sup>200</sup> The DE representative at the meeting suggested that

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<sup>195</sup> Thane, ‘Towards Equal Opportunities?’, p. 206.

<sup>196</sup> Dame Joan Vickers had called for equal pay in the House of Commons in 1968, Dame Joan Vickers, *Hansard* (21.10.1968), vol. 770, cc. 863-4. Mr Ashley in 1972 asked what steps the Secretary of State for Employment ‘is taking to encourage Remploy to pay equal pay to women for equal work’. The reply was that ‘no encouragement is need. Remploy is well aware of the need to move progressively towards equal pay’, Mr Ashley, *Hansard* (01.08.1972), vol. 842, cc.75-6w. See also TNA BM 3/54, ‘An anniversary message from Secretary of State for Employment – The Rt. Hon. Michael Foot’, *Remploy News* (November, 1975).

<sup>197</sup> TNA BM 5/1, Remploy Limited, ‘Remploy Wages Agreement’ (1973); TNA BM 5/1, Remploy Limited, ‘Personnel Department Circular No. 1271: Equal Pay Act and Fit Female Industrial Staff’ (28.03.1973); TNA BM 8/49, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three-Hundred and Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (22.02.1973).

<sup>198</sup> TNA BM 5/1, ‘Remploy Wages Agreement’ (1974). Mr. Harold Walker, *Hansard* (30.06.1975), vol. 894, cc.302-3w.

<sup>199</sup> TNA BM 3/54, ‘An anniversary message from Secretary of State for Employment – The Rt. Hon. Michael Foot’, *Remploy News* (November, 1975). K. Morgan, ‘Foot, Michael Mackintosh (1913–2010), journalist, politician, and author’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (26.05.2016), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-102722> (accessed 30/07/2019).

<sup>200</sup> TNA BM 8/79, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (15.01.1975). For further discussion of this, TNA BM 8/79, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (16.10.1975); ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (18.12.1975). For pressure from Blind Workshop rates see meetings of 1974 in TNA BM 8/49.

‘care should be taken to avoid undue publicity of this fact’.<sup>201</sup> The result was that disabled women in Remploy at this time enjoyed a wage rate higher than the average of their non-disabled counterparts. However, while the rates of pay for men and women were established in Remploy as the same, average actual weekly earnings, factoring in bonuses and overtime, continued to be different, with these reported in November 1976 to be £43.18 for men and £41.62 for women.<sup>202</sup> Though this was not a large difference, it nevertheless demonstrates that despite Remploy adopting equal pay in line with the 1970 Act, disabled men in Remploy were still able to earn more than their female colleagues.

#### Status of Women in Remploy: Promotion and Representation

There is also the question of promotion and advancement for female workers in Remploy and representation in senior positions within the company. It has been noted by historians such as Bruley, Summerfield, Holloway and Thane that women were less likely to hold senior positions, with a so-called ‘glass ceiling’, referring to the invisible barriers faced by women in advancement ‘up’ the promotion ladder, resulting in women occupying an inferior position in the workplace.<sup>203</sup> The Executive Director claimed in his overview of Remploy in 1953 that ‘it has always been the policy of the Company to advance disabled employees to supervisory posts where they were considered to be capable of the work’.<sup>204</sup> Again there is no clear breakdown but it does appear that this applied to women as well as to men, at least to a certain

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<sup>201</sup> TNA BM 8/79, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (15.01.1975).

<sup>202</sup> TNA BM 8/84, Remploy Limited, ‘National Consultative Committee Meeting: Personnel Statistics, Company Personnel Strengths’ (14.04.1977).

<sup>203</sup> Laybourn, *Unemployment and Employment Policies Concerning Women in Britain*, p. 187; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, p. 99; Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War*; Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, p. 209; Thane, ‘Towards Equal Opportunities?’, p. 184.

<sup>204</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, ‘A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years’ (March, 1953), p. 38.

level. The same document noted that in all the Packaging factories the inspectors and leading hands were comprised of ‘both male and female’ employees.<sup>205</sup> It is possible to get a better sense of this from the 1960s onwards in the pages of *Remploy News*. Here we see in the regular reports of different factories, mentions of women as ‘charge-hands’, ‘supervisors’ or ‘inspectors’, and it appears that this is not something out of the ordinary.<sup>206</sup>

More senior positions rarely opened up for women however, whether disabled or not. Two articles in *Remploy News* in 1972 noted that there were only ‘two lady foremen’, both of whom were in factories in the Knitwear Group.<sup>207</sup> The first article was a profile of one of these women who worked at the Abertillery factory, under the headline ‘Mother Superior’, a nickname apparently used to refer to her in the factory.<sup>208</sup> It was noted that she had been with the company for eleven years ‘and worked her way up from sewing machinist to her present position’.<sup>209</sup> The article noted that the factory ‘leading hand’ was also a woman and that this had left them in ‘sole charge of the factory floor’ and seventy male employees when the manager had recently been ill.<sup>210</sup> The article focus was on the peculiarity of this situation. In 1976 there was a further article on the Abertillery factory which was apparently unique in that ‘apart from the manager, all the top jobs are held by women’.<sup>211</sup> Specifically these were the forewoman previously profiled, alongside two charge-hands and the

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>206</sup> See for example, TNA BM 6/8, *Remploy News*, 55 (Autumn, 1962); TNA BM 6/10, *Remploy News*, 61 (Spring, 1964); *Remploy News*, 62 (Summer, 1964); TNA BM 6/13, *Remploy News*, 73 (Summer, 1967); TNA BM 6/15, *Remploy News*, 82 (Autumn, 1969); *Remploy News*, 83 (Winter, 1969-70); TNA BM 6/18, *Remploy News*, 88 (Autumn, 1971); *Remploy News*, 88 (February, 1972); *Remploy News*, 89 (August, 1972); *Remploy News*, 90 (11.1972). *Remploy News*, 108 (March, 1976); *Remploy News*, 110 (July, 1976); *Remploy News*, 121 (April, 1978).

<sup>207</sup> TNA BM 6/18, *Remploy News*, 89 (August, 1972); *Remploy News*, 90 (November, 1972).

<sup>208</sup> TNA BM 6/18, *Remploy News*, 89 (August, 1972).

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> *Remploy News*, 110 (July, 1976).

factory accountant.<sup>212</sup> All these women had been employed for some years within the company and appear to have worked there way up to their position.<sup>213</sup> Promotion to the position of ‘foreman’ for women remained rare as the article noted that it was ‘a position achieved by only a handful of women throughout our factories’.<sup>214</sup> The promotion of women to management was rarer still during the period, beyond the Homework section which as has been mentioned was perceived as being a particularly female area. *Remploy News* reported in 1971 that for the first time a woman had been made ‘manageress of the Bristol showroom’.<sup>215</sup> The first woman factory manager would have to wait until 1975.<sup>216</sup> This occasion was marked by an article in *Remploy News* under the headline ‘A Woman Becomes Factory Manager’ as the woman in question took charge of the Salford factory.<sup>217</sup> By 1979 she remained the only woman factory manager in Remploy.<sup>218</sup>

Finally, in terms of the Remploy Board of Directors, there was only ever a maximum of one woman member at any time. From the beginning of the company there was a single female Board Member, Miss (later Dame) Caroline Haslett, founder of the Electrical Association for Women in 1924 and the first woman to become a member of the British Electricity Authority, who resigned from Remploy in 1948.<sup>219</sup> In

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> TNA BM 6/17, *Remploy News*, 86 (Spring, 1971).

<sup>216</sup> *Remploy News*, 105 (October, 1975).

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> *Remploy News*, 125 (December, 1978).

<sup>219</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the First Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (30.05.1945). She became Dame Haslett in 1947, TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (29.07.1947); TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, ‘A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years: Appendix H’ (March, 1953). Citrine, (sic) & E.Symons, ‘Haslett, Dame Caroline Harriet (1895–1957), electrical engineer and electricity industry administrator’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (06.01.2011), <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-33751> (accessed 30/07/2019).

choosing a successor to the position, the MOL informed the Board that pressure was coming from the Women's Advisory Committee to replace her with another woman.<sup>220</sup> This was something that the MOL was already considering with one official remarking 'there is no particular necessity that the Board should contain a woman, but I think this is desirable if it can be done'.<sup>221</sup> MOL officials raised a number of suggestions with one document listing potential candidates with comments on their experience and personality.<sup>222</sup> The eventual choice was Countess Roseberry who first attended a Board meeting in May 1949.<sup>223</sup> She was to resign a little over a year later and was replaced in November 1950 by a man, leaving no woman member on the Board.<sup>224</sup> This was to remain the case until 1958 with the addition of Dame Hancock to the Board.<sup>225</sup> Upon her retirement in April 1966, the Board was informed that the MOL had decided upon her replacement, Mrs Patterson, who remained on the Board as the only female member for the remainder of the period considered in this thesis.<sup>226</sup> Such positions were not part of the normal promotion structure, but this is important in terms of the representation at Board level of the interests of Remploy's female workers. This chapter has already noted that the factories environments themselves were not geared towards the needs of the women. It is readily apparent from examination of the minutes of Board Meetings across the period that it was these female Board members who raised the needs of women employees. Dame Haslett for example, queried the separate rates of pay and campaigned, unsuccessfully, for

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<sup>220</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (24.11.1948).

<sup>221</sup> TNA LAB 20/120, 'Note from Sir Harold Wiles to Secretary' (26.04.1948).

<sup>222</sup> TNA LAB 20/120, 'Note to Sir Harold Wiles from Mr Taylor' (24.04.1948).

<sup>223</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Forty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors' (23.02.1949); 'Minutes of the Forty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (25.05.1949).

<sup>224</sup> TNA BM 8/2., Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Fifty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors' (27.09.1950); 'Minutes of the Fifty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (22.11.1950).

<sup>225</sup> TNA BM 8/2, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Thirty-Ninth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (15.01.1958).

<sup>226</sup> TNA BM 8/3, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Two Hundredth and Thirtieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (21.04.1966). For end of period see TNA BM 8/80.

Remploy to adopt the same rates for men and women.<sup>227</sup> As has already been mentioned, Countess Roseberry was directed to give her attention to the Homework Scheme.<sup>228</sup> Dame Hancock registered her opposition to the 1961 wage settlement which disadvantaged women employees.<sup>229</sup> Mrs Patterson was perhaps the most active in this regard. During the period of her appointment she campaigned, again unsuccessfully, for female employees to have facilities for cervical cancer tests in Remploy, raised again the question of wage differentiation between men and women, and suggested a raised minimum wage rate for women.<sup>230</sup>

In Remploy therefore, while there was clearly some promotion of women employees to mid-level supervisory positions, there were only a handful of instances of women being promoted beyond this. There does appear to exist a 'glass ceiling' with promotion beyond the supervisory level a rarity and only a single instance of a female factory manager which would have to wait until 1975. Representation at Board level was likewise extremely limited and as a result the needs of women employees were not always highlighted or given priority.

## Conclusions

Revealing the hitherto unexplored reality of the employment of disabled women in Remploy has provided a fresh perspective and a contribution to a number of important

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<sup>227</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (28.01.1947); 'Minutes of the Twenty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors' (21.04.1947).

<sup>228</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Forty-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (25.05.1949).

<sup>229</sup> TNA BM 8/3, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the One Hundred and Seventy-Fourth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (15.03.1961).

<sup>230</sup> TNA BM 8/3, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Forty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors' (20.04.1967); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Forty-Second Meeting of the Board of Directors' (18.05.1967); 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Forty-Fifth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (21.09.1967); TNA BM 8/49, 'Minutes of the Two Hundred and Eighty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors' (17.12.1970).

areas of understanding in welfare provision and employment in post-war Britain. In the most basic terms it has been determined that women employees in Remploy always represented a minority. As with employment generally the number of women workers increased steadily but this was only to reach slightly less than twenty per cent of the overall workforce by 1979. In this way, Remploy represents a further area of welfare and employment provision which was indeed allocated, as Sainsbury and others have argued, ‘overwhelmingly to men’ in the period.<sup>231</sup>

This raises questions of access to Remploy for women, and this chapter has provided the detailed examination of this issue to test the assertions made by Anderson. It has revealed that there were a number of factors which may have prevented disabled women from registering as Section II on the Disabled Persons Register and attempting to enter sheltered employment which include, but are not limited to, those claimed by Anderson. The suggestion that industry was an area in which women were unlikely to get involved has been shown to have merit, as this was one of the primary issues considered at the time. That women may have found Remploy unattractive also highlights the focus of such provision on men, with little thought given to how to target sheltered employment to meet the desires and needs of severely disabled women. Alongside this, the traditional ties to the home, understood to have prevented many women seeking employment in the period generally, have also been shown to have been equally applicable for disabled women as well, with the additional possibility of disabled women being ‘hidden’ by their families.

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<sup>231</sup> Sainsbury, ‘Disabled People and the Personal Social Services’, p. 188; Anderson, ‘British Women, Disability and the Second World War’, p. 50; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 169-70; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 119; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 134; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, pp. 224-5.

Furthermore, we cannot discount discrimination in recruitment practice, if not policy, as the understanding of particular trades as particularly suitable for either men or women could mean that women applicants for Remploy may have been discounted because of their gender. Attempts in Remploy to demarcate certain trades according to gender, illustrates how pervasive such concepts were, existing in a company in which the traditional assumption of male physical superiority in production did not apply. As this chapter has shown, however, this segregation was never absolute even where it did exist, with cases of women taking on ‘men’s work’ and men taking on ‘women’s work’. It has also been revealed that in a large number of factories there was a very real ‘gender mix’, with little evidence of segregation on the factory floor. In many Remploy factories in the period, male and female workers performed the same jobs side by side, and socialised outside of work. In this way the peculiarities of Remploy and sheltered employment are revealed as the nature of the workforce as ‘disabled’ could serve to overrule some of the traditional gender divisions common in open employment.<sup>232</sup>

That segregation was limited does not, of course, entail equality in status. This chapter has added the case of Remploy and the severely disabled to our understanding of inequality in women’s employment in the period.<sup>233</sup> In terms of wages, this chapter has revealed that Remploy followed the pattern of gender differentials until the passing of the Equal Pay Act and the establishment of equal pay in the 1970s. This

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<sup>232</sup> Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, pp. 99, 119; Thane, ‘Towards Equal Opportunities?’, p. 188; Glucksmann, *Women Assemble*, p. 281; Gladstone, *The Twentieth Century Welfare State*, pp. 119-22; Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, p. 186.

<sup>233</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 42-3; Laybourn, *Unemployment and Employment Policies Concerning Women in Britain*, p. 187; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, pp. 99-119; Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War*; Glucksmann, *Women Assemble*, p. 281; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 119-22; Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, p. 186; Thane, ‘Towards Equal Opportunities? Women in Britain since 1945’, pp. 183-208; Lewis, *Women in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 78-91.



was not due to a particular belief that this was justified in Remploy, but rather that it was important that Remploy emulate conditions in outside industry and not have wages in the government subsidised company exceed the norm elsewhere. While women were generally paid less with this principle in mind, it has been shown that this was mitigated in favour of women on a number of occasions and that Remploy's position as a government company led to the establishment of equal pay in line with the 1970 Equal Pay Act, which was not the norm in outside industry. As a result we see that in terms of wages, while not providing equality until the end of the period, disabled women workers in Remploy did enjoy some advantages owing to the particular nature of the company as the central government sheltered employment scheme.

As to the extent of an existence of a 'glass ceiling' in promotion for female employees in Remploy, while supervisory positions upon the factory floor may have been attainable, more senior positions and certainly management were out of reach for all but a handful of women. Thus women in Remploy appeared to have faced similar added difficulties in advancement as women in open employment.<sup>234</sup> Similarly, in terms of representation of women at Board level, the maximum of one female board member at any time left little support for issues concerning women workers. A likely result of this being the lack of facilities for women in factories and little regard for changing the environment of the factory to reflect the growing number of women employed. As a male-dominated environment, especially at senior levels, it was not until the very end of the period considered here that such issues were realised and that

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<sup>234</sup> Laybourn, *Unemployment and Employment Policies Concerning Women in Britain*, p. 187; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, p. 99; Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War*; Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, p. 209; Thane, 'Towards Equal Opportunities?', p. 184.

signs of a fundamental re-think of the company in terms of operations and environments were beginning to be seriously considered.

This chapter has further challenged the image of Remploy as a coherent, catch-all scheme. It is apparent that Remploy did not cater equally for severely disabled men and women, with gender a factor in how one might access and experience sheltered employment. Once again we see wide variation at a factory level in terms of the gender mix and environment, further highlighting the lack of a typical Remploy experience. A Remploy worker in one factory might find themselves in an entirely male factory, and another find themselves in a factory with a genuine gender-mix, working alongside a number of men and women and socialising with them outside of the work.

This thesis has thus far highlighted the nature of Remploy, and revealed that it was not the coherent, humanitarian, catch-all scheme that has been assumed. The question that remains is what alternative sheltered employment was available to severely disabled people and how this combined with Remploy. This will now be considered in the final chapter.

## **Chapter Six**

### **The Mixed Economy in Sheltered Employment and the Moving Frontier of the State**

Having focused upon Remploy as the central government scheme and as the chief provider of sheltered employment during the period considered in this thesis, this chapter will highlight the place of the company in the wider field of such provision. The traditional view of the post-war period was that the expansion of statutory welfare resulted in the curtailment of voluntary activity in those areas, until the sector experienced something of a resurgence in the mid-to-late 1960s.<sup>1</sup> This view has since been challenged with scholars such as Finlayson, Younghusband, Taylor, Prochaska, Kendall, and Knapp illustrating the continued existence of voluntary welfare throughout the post-war period.<sup>2</sup> The result is a current understanding of a 'mixed economy' of welfare, in which traditional voluntarism survived and acted as a 'junior partner' to state provision.<sup>3</sup> The case of sheltered employment has not yet been considered in this area, yet the pervading conception of Remploy has been that it acted as *the* provider of post-war sheltered employment, with the assumption that it made the charitable workshops which came before it obsolete and became the only meaningful provider. Only Anderson has hinted at the survival of voluntary workshops in the immediate post-war period, though without detailed examination and with no consideration as to the extent this occurred.<sup>4</sup> This chapter will therefore

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<sup>1</sup> Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 66; *The Future of Voluntary Organisations: Report of the Wolfenden Committee*; Knight, *Voluntary Action*; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*; Bruce, *The Coming of the Welfare State*; Kitson-Clark, *An Expanding Society*.

<sup>2</sup> Finlayson, *Citizen, State and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990*; Younghusband, *Social Work in Britain*; Taylor, 'Voluntary action and the state', p. 215; Prochaska, *The Voluntary Impulse*; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, p. 277; Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-7.

<sup>3</sup> Owen, *English Philanthropy*, p. 527; Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-7, 133-9; Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, p. 89.

<sup>4</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 184.

be the first attempt to consider the existence and extent of a mixed economy in sheltered employment. This will serve both to clarify the place of Remploy in the wider field and add the case of sheltered employment to the current understanding of the mixed economy in the welfare state.

As the statutory central government provider of sheltered employment, Remploy represented what is referred to in other areas of welfare as the ‘frontier of the state’.<sup>5</sup> The mixed economy has not been seen as a static relationship between the state and voluntary provision, but rather one in which state involvement, represented by the ‘frontier’, has moved. The ‘moving frontier’ refers therefore to the changing relationship between central government, local government and the voluntary sector in delivering welfare provision.<sup>6</sup> Both Grier and Hampton have called for further examination of these complex interactions and this chapter seeks to do so for sheltered employment.<sup>7</sup> The exploration of the mixed economy in this chapter will therefore centre upon this aspect of Remploy and thereby track the movement of the company as the representation of the frontier of the state. In doing so it will examine the composition and extent of the mixed economy, the changing place of Remploy within it, the complex relationships between the providers of sheltered employment, and the degree to which it combined to form a cohesive sheltered employment service.

This chapter is structured according to three distinct periods which exemplify the movement of Remploy as the frontier of the state. The first section considers the

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<sup>5</sup> Finlayson, ‘A Moving Frontier’, pp. 183-206.

<sup>6</sup> Finlayson, *Citizen, State and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990*, pp. 11-2; Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-7.

<sup>7</sup> Grier, ‘Voluntary Rights and Statutory Wrongs’, pp. 263-4; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 8.

period 1944-1951, with the initial creation of Remploy advancing the frontier dramatically. The following section begins with the halt to the expansion of Remploy explained in Chapter Three, and the resulting continuation of a mixed economy to 1970. The final section then considers the 1970s when fundamental questions were asked of the desirability of a mixed economy in sheltered employment.

#### The Frontier Advances, 1944-1951

As was noted in Chapter Two, there were a range of voluntary organisations providing sheltered employment before the outbreak of the Second World War. Prior to the creation of Remploy, sheltered employment for severely disabled people was solely provided by these charitable organisations with some limited financial support from government under the MOL's 'Scheme of Grants'. At the close of the Second World War there remained a number of voluntary providers of sheltered employment still in operation. The extent of the existing provision at this time was indicated by the newly formed Sheltered Employment Committee (SEC), formed by the NACED which produced a report in May 1945.<sup>8</sup> The report noted that the SEC had examined a list of 'those organisations at present included in the 'Scheme of Grants' which showed '16 organisations covering approximately 402 disabled persons'.<sup>9</sup> They also examined 'a further list of organisations providing sheltered employment but not having arrangements with the Ministry', which 'showed 22 organisations covering approximately 2,744 disabled persons'.<sup>10</sup> The committee warned that this was only 'a general indication of the size of the field at present covered by any form of special

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<sup>8</sup> TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, 'Report to the National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled, N.A.C. 9' (10.05.1945).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

provision'.<sup>11</sup> The report also concluded that this provision was undoubtedly 'meagre and inadequate'.<sup>12</sup>

The list of charitable sheltered employment examined by the SEC in 1945 is presented in Appendix 6, and provides a useful illustration of the variation in the form this provision took. As well as some organisations providing dedicated sheltered workshops, there were also various forms of dedicated sheltered employment within wider welfare contexts, such as workshops within residential settlements, hospitals, TB sanatoria, and training colleges.<sup>13</sup> It is immediately apparent that the scale of such operations could vary widely, with several organisations providing employment for hundreds of disabled people, and some only very small numbers.<sup>14</sup> For example, we see 600 disabled people reported as working at the Papworth Village Settlement, where they would live as well, and, by contrast, Cleethorpes Appliance Industries providing some form of sheltered employment to only four.<sup>15</sup> Within these extremes it is apparent that in general such provision tended to cater for smaller numbers of disabled people. Appendix 6 also reveals the various types of work undertaken in these voluntary workshops, with the traditional trades associated with sheltered

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<sup>11</sup> TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, 'Minutes of the Second Meeting' (01.05.1945).

<sup>12</sup> TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, 'Report to the National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled, N.A.C. 9' (10.05.1945).

<sup>13</sup> TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, 'Scheme of Grants to Undertakings Employing Severely Disabled Persons: Organisations at present included in the Scheme, S.E.C I' (1945); SEC, 'Undertakings Providing Employment for the Severely Disabled other than those at present included in the Ministry of Labour and National Service Scheme of Grants S.E.C 2' (1945).

<sup>14</sup> TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, 'Scheme of Grants to Undertakings Employing Severely Disabled Persons: Organisations at present included in the Scheme, S.E.C I' (1945); SEC, 'Undertakings Providing Employment for the Severely Disabled other than those at present included in the Ministry of Labour and National Service Scheme of Grants S.E.C 2' (1945).

<sup>15</sup> For more on village settlement schemes, see TNA PIN 15/34, 'Village Settlements for Disabled Ex-Service Men Scheme' (October, 1917); 'Village Settlements for the Disabled', *The Lancet*, (03.11.1917); 'Reconstruction: Village Settlements for Disabled Ex-Service Men', *Westminster Gazette* (09.11.1917); TNA PIN 15/37, Village Centres Council, 'First Annual Report 1919'; TNA PIN 15/36, Committee on Employment of Severely Disabled Ex-Service Men, 'Minutes of the Third Meeting' (20.10.1920). Cohen, *The War Come Home*, p. 35; University of Leeds Special Collections, T.H. Mawson, *An Imperial Obligation: Industrial Villages for Partially Disabled Soldiers and Sailors* (London, 1917).

employment apparent, such as woodwork, knitting, gardening, farming, cabinet assembly and watch and clock repair.<sup>16</sup> Given the range of such provision it is perhaps unsurprising that the wages paid to disabled workers were widely variable. Charitable bodies were in principle suppose to approximate Trade Union rates and should have paid workers no less than the government's training allowances for severely disabled people.<sup>17</sup> In practice there was a wide range of variation with multiple rates based on productivity or skill and a mixture of time rates and piece rates.<sup>18</sup> A further notable variation was the explicit limiting to particular groups of disabled people. This reflected the various purposes and 'causes' to which these organisations were devoted. In the most obvious example, sheltered employment in TB sanatoria, was, of course, available only for those with TB. Similarly, charities were largely set up to deal with particular causes and therefore sheltered employment provision was focused on these, often as just one aspect of wider welfare in which the charity was involved. Thus sheltered workshops run by the British Legion provided only for ex-servicemen which the charity was established to support, while the workshop run by the Ayrshire Society for the Deaf, as its name suggests, provided sheltered employment only for the deaf. Appendix 6 illustrates that most of the organisations listed did explicitly limit their services by particular types of disability, gender, or grouping such as ex-servicemen at this time.

As noted in Chapter Two, and contrary to the orthodox view, initial discussions about post-war sheltered employment during the war-time coalition government presumed a

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<sup>16</sup> TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, 'Scheme of Grants to Undertakings Employing Severely Disabled Persons: Organisations at present included in the Scheme, S.E.C I' (1945); SEC, 'Undertakings Providing Employment for the Severely Disabled other than those at present included in the Ministry of Labour and National Service Scheme of Grants S.E.C 2' (1945).

<sup>17</sup> TNA LAB 20/173, MOL, 'Remuneration of Workers in Sheltered Employment' (1945).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.; TNA LAB 20/78, MOL, 'Note from Regional Controller, Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons' (12.02.1945).

continued role for the voluntary sector. The Tomlinson Report which informed the DPEA envisaged the continuation of the existing charitable undertakings in the provision of sheltered employment which the government scheme would serve to complement.<sup>19</sup> The war-time Minister of Labour, Ernest Bevin, highlighted in Chapter Two as the individual chiefly responsible for establishing the scheme which would become Remploy, himself explained that in doing so ‘it is not my intention to start competition with the institutions in existence’.<sup>20</sup> The terms of the DPEA itself did not specify what means of providing sheltered employment should be utilised, leaving such decisions to the MOL to decide.<sup>21</sup> This was again echoed in the initial plans for Remploy drawn up by the MOL towards the end of the war.<sup>22</sup> Consideration throughout the period of the war-time coalition therefore consistently advocated and assumed that the voluntary provision of sheltered employment would continue. With such provision having proved inadequate to meet the demand, necessitating the new government scheme, there was the presumption that Remploy would become the majority provider, but not the sole provider. A mixed economy in sheltered employment was therefore imagined by the coalition government for peace-time.

Under the Labour government elected in 1945, however, the pendulum swung markedly towards the role of the state in providing sheltered employment through the newly formed company. Remploy was heralded as the desired provider of sheltered employment. With the rapid early expansion of the company, it was assumed that

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<sup>19</sup> *Report of Inter-departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 6415 (1943), para. 90-1, pp. 34-5, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 15/05/2018).

<sup>20</sup> Mr. Ernest Bevin, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1347; Mr. Ernest Bevin, *Hansard* (24.03.1944), vol. 398, cc. 1215.

<sup>21</sup> DPEA.

<sup>22</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, MOL, ‘Employment under Special Conditions: Outline of a Scheme under Section 15 of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944’ (June, 1944).



Remploy would take over much, if not all, of the provision for sheltered employment from the voluntary sector.<sup>23</sup> This directive clearly came from the government itself, as the Remploy Board had expressed the wish to expand slowly alongside other providers and agreed in their first meeting that plans for the company should be adapted to prevent any overlap with existing charitable organisations.<sup>24</sup> The Labour government however, viewed Remploy as the desired agent for providing the envisaged comprehensive scheme of sheltered employment, with the Minister of Labour, George Isaacs, explaining in the Commons that it was properly the role of the state to provide sheltered employment through Remploy.<sup>25</sup> As Marilyn Taylor has explained, Labour's general view of voluntarism at this time was that it was 'patronising and outdated', while Kendall and Knapp have suggested that many in the Labour Government, including Clement Attlee himself, 'expected and hoped' that the expansion of state welfare would see charitable services 'with their aura of middle-class patronage' made redundant.<sup>26</sup> Digby has further argued that the expansion of the role of the state became something of a common currency in almost all social policy discussion 'at this time'.<sup>27</sup> For historians of disability such as Hampton, however, provision for disabled people marked the exception to this rule, with a continuing reliance on non-statutory provision.<sup>28</sup> Remploy illustrates that this was not the case for all aspects of disability provision. In the case of sheltered employment at least, the desire to see Remploy take over from charitable providers was entirely in keeping

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<sup>23</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Twentieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (25.03.1947).

<sup>24</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the First meeting of the Board of Directors' (30.05.1945).

<sup>25</sup> Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (02.12.1947), vol. 445, cc. 186-8. TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Twentieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (25.03.1947); TNA LAB 20/399, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director Report No. 22' (21.07.1947).

<sup>26</sup> Taylor, 'Voluntary action and the state', p. 215; Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-7.

<sup>27</sup> Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, p. 65.

<sup>28</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 57.

with the early-Attlee government's expansion of the state and its wider attitude to welfare, social services, nationalisation and central planning.<sup>29</sup>

It is apparent that while voluntary sheltered organisations were not prohibited, their continuation became subject to them doing so 'efficiently' and providing 'co-operation' with the MOL's overall plan for sheltered employment through Remploy.<sup>30</sup>

Where this did not occur, 'the position will be reported to the Disabled Persons Employment Corporation with a view to the necessary provision being made directly by the Corporation'.<sup>31</sup> Thus, alternative providers of sheltered workshops would have to demonstrate an ability to provide sheltered employment as effectively as Remploy, or face absorption into the company.<sup>32</sup> This quickly became a reality as a number of voluntary workshops were taken over by Remploy.<sup>33</sup> There is some evidence that this was based on the 'quality' of sheltered employment provided, with the MOL commenting on the poor quality of work provided through many charitable workshops in terms of the reliance on the traditional trades of woodwork, assembly and basket making.<sup>34</sup> However, the chief measure and cause of absorption into

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<sup>29</sup> Kavanagh and Morris, *Consensus Politics*, pp. 24-5; J.E. Cronin, *The Politics of State Expansion: War, State and Society in Twentieth-Century Britain* (London, Routledge, 1991), pp. 153-7; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 231; Morgan, *Britain Since 1945*, p. 29; Taylor, 'Voluntary action and the state', p. 219.

<sup>30</sup> TNA LAB 20/173, MOL, 'Training and Employment of Blind Persons' (1945).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> This was similarly laid out in the DPEA.

<sup>33</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (28.01.1947); 'Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (28.01.1947); 'Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (28.01.1947); 'Minutes of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (25.02.1947); 'Minutes of the Forty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors' (23.02.1949); Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Forty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (26.10.1949); TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 13.

<sup>34</sup> TNA LAB 20/78, MOL, 'Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops Fulham Factory' (February, 1951); MOL, 'Note of conversation with Miss Acton' (09.09.1950); 'The Forces Help Society and Lord Roberts Workshops Gazette, Vol L, No. 1' (January, 1950); 'Movalite Advertisement Brochure'; MOL, 'Note to Miss Acton' (24.12.1949); MOL, 'Note to Miss Acton' (11.08.1948); The Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops, 'Note from Miss Acton' (14.07.1948); MOL, 'Report on visit to the Lord Roberts Memorial Workshop Fulham' (01.04.1948); MOL, 'Note of Meeting' (23.06.1948).

Remploy was financial, with the post-war environment proving too challenging for many workshops which were always economically frail.

Such financial difficulty was partially due to the general post-war trading conditions which extended across industry, but this was undoubtedly exacerbated for these workshops by the creation of Remploy itself.<sup>35</sup> In announcing the formation of the company, Bevin stressed that he wished it to work in concert with voluntary organisations and the initial outline of Remploy produced in 1944 similarly stressed the need for close cooperation.<sup>36</sup> This did initially occur as Remploy began to be formed, with the Directors of the company seeking a great deal of advice from existing charitable workshops, particular the Lords Robert's Memorial Workshops, the largest charitable provider at the time.<sup>37</sup> However, such cooperation soon vanished as the company began to operate, with Remploy and voluntary workshops left to compete for the scant work available in the immediate post-war climate. This was particularly the case for government contracts.<sup>38</sup> The awarding of these contracts to sheltered workshops had long been considered desirable, and in 1950 formal arrangements were introduced to give them a measure of priority.<sup>39</sup> This still left Remploy and the other workshops in competition with each other. The issue was raised in the Commons in 1950 with one Conservative MP questioning the wisdom of fostering this kind of competition.<sup>40</sup> This does not appear to have been the result of

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<sup>35</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 183-4.

<sup>36</sup> Mr. Ernest Bevin, *Hansard* (10.12.1943), vol. 395, cc. 1347; Mr. Ernest Bevin, *Hansard* (24.03.1944), vol. 398, cc. 1215. TNA LAB 20/108, MOL, 'Employment under Special Conditions: Outline of a Scheme under Section 15 of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944' (June, 1944).

<sup>37</sup> See TNA LAB 20/187; TNA LAB 20/78, 'Note from Mr Isaacs' (12.12.1945).

<sup>38</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Minutes of the Thirty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors' (06.04.1948); TNA LAB 20/444, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director Report No. 34' (21.10.1948).

<sup>39</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), pp. 9, 27.

<sup>40</sup> Mr. D. Llewellyn and Mr. G. Isaacs, *Hansard* (07.11.1950), vol. 480, cv. 46.

any attempt to create a competitive market, but rather an unintended consequence of the system in operation. Government contracts were not overly attractive financially, with both Remploy and the other workshops bemoaning the viability of what was offered, but they did provide a significant source of much-needed work and Remploy was awarded the majority of them.<sup>41</sup> In addition to such trading woes, the introduction of a state scheme in Remploy also reduced the impetus for public generosity through charitable donations to voluntary organisations, upon which they heavily relied. Finlayson suggested that at this time the general public ‘assumed that the new welfare legislation rendered charities redundant or obsolete, and no longer felt obliged to support them’.<sup>42</sup> Though Prochaska noted that people did keep giving to welfare provisions such as hospitals, despite the state having entered into delivering such provision, this was significantly reduced, with inadequate resources thus a common problem for charitable organisations at this time.<sup>43</sup>

In the case of charitable sheltered workshops several soon proved unviable, including the King’s Roll War Disabled Men’s Association Limited, which had recorded a loss of £4,500 during 1948 and could no longer pay for its premises.<sup>44</sup> This was absorbed into Remploy, alongside other workshops such as the Nursery School Equipment Centre in Edinburgh, Spero Industries Limited, Michael Works Limited and the Longton Disabled Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Cardboard Box Factory.<sup>45</sup> In such cases it is

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<sup>41</sup> See Chapter Three for Remploy and for Lord Roberts see TNA LAB 20/78, MOL, ‘Note of conversation with Miss Acton’ (09.09.1950).

<sup>42</sup> Finlayson, *Citizen, State and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990*, p. 298.

<sup>43</sup> Prochaska, *The Voluntary Impulse*; Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, p. 89.

<sup>44</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Forty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (23.02.1949).

<sup>45</sup> TNA BM 8/1, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, ‘Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (28.01.1947); ‘Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (28.01.1947); ‘Minutes of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (25.02.1947); ‘Minutes of the Forty-First Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (23.02.1949); Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Forty-Eighth Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (26.10.1949); TNA BM 10/1,

clear that the view of the MOL was that the best course of action was not to increase the grants available to such organisations, nor to see the workshops close, but instead to see them transferred to Remploy in the hope that the company could improve their fortunes. It is also important to consider that it was not simply a hope that ownership by Remploy would reduce losses, or would continue to provide sheltered employment despite a loss, that was expressed by the MOL. In this early period of Remploy's existence it was still hoped, in common with the early optimism which greeted the nationalisation of parts of industry, that the scheme would prove able to contribute to the country's economy in a positive way and even run at a profit, which in turn could be reinvested to continue its expansion.<sup>46</sup>

As well as voluntary organisations, sheltered employment was also undertaken by LAs, which had been responsible for providing sheltered employment for blind people exclusively since 1920 as an element of welfare under the Blind Persons Act.<sup>47</sup> By the end of the Second World War most LAs had such workshops in place with over 3,000 blind persons employed overall.<sup>48</sup> The DPEA technically gave 'permissive power' for LAs to provide sheltered workshops for 'sighted' severely disabled people as well, under direction from the MOL.<sup>49</sup> This was stated more explicitly in the National Assistance Act 1948. Designed to provide for those who slipped through the net of the

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Remploy Limited, 'Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), p. 13.

<sup>46</sup> Mr. George Isaacs, *Hansard* (02.12.1947), vol. 445, cc. 186-8; Dorey, *British Politics Since 1945*, pp. 7-9; T. Gourvish, 'The Rise (and Fall?) of State-Owned Enterprise', in T. Gourvish and A. O'Day (eds.), *Britain Since 1945* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1991), p. 111.

<sup>47</sup> TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, 'Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain' (February, 1958).

<sup>48</sup> TNA LAB 20/56, 'Memorandum by the Ministry of Health on the Welfare of the Blind together with a Note by the Board of Education on Training, R.D.5' (February, 1942); 'Interdepartmental Committee on the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons: Extract from Minutes of Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 1942'; TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, 'Second Report to the National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled: Appendix I' (1945).

<sup>49</sup> This was noted in the Piercy Report, *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on The Rehabilitation Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 9883 (1956), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 21/07/2017); DPEA, Section 15.

contributory social insurance scheme which had been established by the National Insurance Act 1946, the National Assistance Act outlined a range of services LAs could offer for disabled people such as social centres, meals-on-wheels schemes and recreational outings.<sup>50</sup> As a result, LAs were empowered – though not obligated – to make arrangements for workshops as part of ‘promoting the welfare’ of those ‘who are blind, deaf or dumb, and other persons who are substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury, or congenital deformity’.<sup>51</sup> The expectations of LAs to provide workshops for the sighted disabled appears to have been considered somewhat ambiguous however, and they focused instead on the much clearer mandate of providing sheltered workshops for the blind, with only the occasional inclusion of small numbers of sighted individuals within these existing workshops.<sup>52</sup>

Under the first post-war Labour governments the frontier of the state in sheltered employment thus advanced dramatically, with Remploy securing a large monopoly and being seen to set a new standard which would have to be met by other providers if they wished to remain independent. As Chapter Three illustrated, however, the rapid expansion of Remploy caused both the Remploy Board of Directors and the Treasury to express concern at the financial cost and a ‘slow-down’ was adopted in order to allow the company a chance to consolidate. Had Remploy indeed operated at a profit as was hoped, and not called itself for a period of consolidation, it is possible that its

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<sup>50</sup> Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, p. 274; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 58; Taylor, ‘Voluntary Action and the State’, p. 220.

<sup>51</sup> National Assistance Act 1948; TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, ‘Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain’ (February, 1958).

<sup>52</sup> *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on The Rehabilitation Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 9883 (1956), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 21/07/2017). This increased from forty-nine people in 1960 to 245 by 1965, TNA LAB 20/1073, NACED, ‘Sheltered Employment Committee Reports’.

role would have continued to increase and advanced the frontier of the state further still.

### The Frontier Halts, 1951-1970

As Chapter Three explained, the pause and slow-down in the expansion of Remploy became a permanent halt under the Conservative government elected in 1951 and the scope of Remploy was to be limited in terms of economic performance throughout the remainder of the period considered in this thesis. With Remploy not expanding as was initially intended in the early period of the Attlee governments, there remained a greater demand for sheltered employment than Remploy itself was placed to deliver. As a result, alternative providers of sheltered employment continued to operate and by 1956 the MOL recorded that there remained some thirty charitable workshops providing sheltered employment for 858 disabled people.<sup>53</sup> As before, financial pressures on such workshops remained and as such there were some mixed fortunes experienced by charitable sheltered workshops which continued into the 1960s. Some organisations, such as the British Legion Cambrian Factory and the Manton Association, experienced severe financial difficulties and had no choice but to either cede control of the workshop or close down altogether.<sup>54</sup> At the same time there were also several new workshops established, with a new Camphill Village Trust Workshop, a laundry unit run by the Scottish Council for the Care of Spastics, and a workshop created by the Industrial Therapy Organisation operating in 1962.<sup>55</sup> By

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<sup>53</sup> TNA LAB 43/268, MOL, 'Note on letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> May 1956 from Mr. F.G. Willey, MP' (1956).

<sup>54</sup> TNA LAB 20/1073, SEC, 'Provision of Sheltered Employment by Local Authorities and Voluntary Bodies' (November, 1962).

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

1965 therefore, the numbers of disabled employees in charitable workshops remained steady at some 863 people.<sup>56</sup>

Greater expansion in alternative sheltered employment occurred as a result of an increasing role for LAs. This was not immediate, however, with LAs initially continuing to provide solely for the blind. In 1956 the Piercy Report noted that excluding those for the blind, ‘no workshops have yet been provided by local authorities’, with the extent of progress limited to plans for one such workshop having been ‘approved’.<sup>57</sup> This was to change as a far greater role for LAs in providing sheltered employment was established in the 1958 amendment to the original DPEA.<sup>58</sup> This amendment made it clear that LAs had the power to provide sheltered employment and, under direction of the MOL, ‘a duty to exercise their powers’.<sup>59</sup> This seems to have had an immediate effect, as by 1962 the MOL could note that eighty-five per cent of LAs had by then taken powers to provide sheltered employment in some form, and by 1964 this had increased to eighty-eight per cent.<sup>60</sup> These figures also included existing provision for blind persons but it is clear that in terms of sighted disabled people, LAs had begun to take on the task as well. This included the increasing incorporation of sighted disabled people into existing blind workshops as well as the creation of dedicated new workshops.

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<sup>56</sup> TNA LAB 20/1073, NACED, ‘Sheltered Employment Committee Reports’.

<sup>57</sup> *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on The Rehabilitation Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 9883 (1956), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 21/07/2017).

<sup>58</sup> Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (Amendment) 1958.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> TNA LAB 20/1073, SEC, ‘Provision of Sheltered Employment by Local Authorities and Voluntary Bodies’ (November, 1962); SEC, ‘Provision of Sheltered Employment by Local Authorities and Voluntary Bodies, S.E.C.107’ (September, 1964).



Not all of these workshops were under the direct control of the LA however.<sup>61</sup> It was increasingly common for LAs to utilise voluntary organisations as agencies through which they could then provide sheltered employment. This arrangement had been set out in the National Assistance Act as one of the ways in which LAs could provide welfare services for the disabled.<sup>62</sup> By 1956 three LAs were working with voluntary organisations in this way.<sup>63</sup> As LA activity increased, a growing number entered into arrangements with charities, including cases where such workshops were in financial difficulties.<sup>64</sup> With both LAs and charitable workshops under funding pressures this was an attractive option to jointly deliver sheltered employment provision, and has been identified as a common occurrence across other forms of welfare in the period as well.<sup>65</sup> In 1960 the number of disabled people in these ‘agency’ workshops was ninety and by 1965 this had increased to 296.<sup>66</sup> Table 6.1 indicates the overall growth in sheltered employment provision from LA and voluntary providers as an alternative to Remploy. Though such provision was to clearly remain a ‘junior partner’ compared to Remploy, there was nevertheless a genuine ‘mixed economy’ in operation.

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<sup>61</sup> TNA LAB 20/1073, SEC, ‘Provision of Sheltered Employment by Local Authorities and Voluntary Bodies’ (November, 1962); NACED, ‘Sheltered Employment Committee Reports’.

<sup>62</sup> National Assistance Act 1948.

<sup>63</sup> *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on The Rehabilitation Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 9883 (1956), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 21/07/2017).

<sup>64</sup> For example, late in 1960 the British Legion Cambrian Factory in Breconshire ‘was in difficulties, and the British Legion Headquarters were considering the withdrawal of their support’. It received support from the local council, TNA LAB 20/1073, SEC, ‘Provision of Sheltered Employment by Local Authorities and Voluntary Bodies’ (November, 1962).

<sup>65</sup> Hampton, ‘Disabled People and the Classic Welfare State’, p. 10; Brenton, *The Voluntary Sector in British Social Services*, p. 27.

<sup>66</sup> TNA LAB 20/1073, NACED, ‘Sheltered Employment Committee Reports’.

**Table 6.1: Number of Sighted Disabled Workers in Sheltered Employment, 1958-1970.**

Year	Section II disabled people in Workshops		Section II disabled people (sighted) in Blind workshops	Total	Section II registered unemployed <sup>67</sup>
	Remploy	LA & Voluntary			
1958	6,185	867	42	7,094	-
1959	6,156	1,073	59	7,288	4,199
1960	6,303	1,089	78	7,470	4,313
1961	6,203	1,055	126	7,384	4,543
1962	6,359	1,121	198	7,678	4,864
1963	6,291	1,240	220	7,751	5,511
1964	6,519	1,520	272	8,311	5,978
1965	6,823	1,650	372	8,845	6,141
1966	6,817	1,686	337	8,840	6,382
1967	6,817	1,827	381	9,057	7,533
1968	7,179	1,999	409	9,605	8,630
1969	7,447	1,978	466	9,891	9,602
1970	7,505	2,132	493	10,130	10,013

Source: TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success: Appendix 5' (1980), p. 73; TNA LAB 20/1071, MOL, 'Unemployed Registered Disabled Persons by Age Groups'. Mr. Green, *Hansard*, (16.04.1962), vol. 658, cc.12-3w. TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document: Table VIII Section II Register 1963-73' (October, 1973).

This continuation and expansion of alternative provision was the result of a number of factors. Political ideology was clearly important. The continuation of a role for a mixed economy in sheltered employment appears to have been consistent with the political discourse and wider context of the mixed economy of welfare in this period. There is no clear demarcation between the attitudes of the Attlee governments and the following Conservative ones towards Remploy as the Board themselves felt that the continued expansion was unsustainable and called for a slow down. We can see however, that though the Conservative governments which followed did not 'destabilise the status quo' in terms of the welfare state, the continuation of this stand-still and hence continuation of sheltered employment provision through charitable

<sup>67</sup> For 1959-1961, TNA LAB 20/1071, MOL, 'Unemployed Registered Disabled Persons by Age Groups'. For 1962, Mr. Green, *Hansard*, (16.04.1962), vol. 658, cc.12-3w. For 1963-70, TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document: Table VIII Section II Register 1963-73' (October, 1973).

services during the 1950s was consistent with the general Conservative outlook on limiting the role of the state, utilising private funding, and its sympathy with voluntary enterprise.<sup>68</sup> As Taylor has noted the importance of the voluntary sector as a valuable 'junior partner' in welfare became increasingly recognised in this period.<sup>69</sup>

Similarly, it has been noted in Chapter Three that the return of a Labour government in 1964 did not see a return to a major expansion of Remploy. A continuation of a mixed economy was again consistent with the views of the Labour Party at this time, with voluntary enterprise no longer considered objectionable. While in opposition the Party had curbed its expectations for further widespread nationalisation and the shock of the rediscovery of poverty, highlighted by the publication in 1965 of Brian Abel-Smith and Peter Townsend's *The Poor and the Poorest*, had shown that the central welfare state had failed to eradicate all social problems.<sup>70</sup> This was also the time which saw the resurgence of non-statutory groups, primarily in the new form of campaigning groups drawing inspiration from civil rights movements in the U.S., with some well known examples including the Child Poverty Action Group, Shelter, and the DIG.<sup>71</sup> Such organisations were more openly critical of government and better able to foster public pressure for policy change.<sup>72</sup> This new form of voluntarism was inherently more acceptable to Labour, contrasting with the aura of middle-class philanthropy which had previously been typical of charitable organisations.<sup>73</sup> Though

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<sup>68</sup> Kavanagh and Morris, *Consensus Politics*, pp. 25-6; Taylor, 'Voluntary action and the state', p. 223; Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 133-9.

<sup>69</sup> Taylor, 'Voluntary action and the state', p. 223.

<sup>70</sup> Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-7; Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, pp. 65, 89; Kavanagh and Morris, *Consensus Politics*, pp. 27-8; Fraser, *The Evolution of the Welfare State*, p. 300.

<sup>71</sup> Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 66-9; Page, *Revisiting the Welfare State*, pp. 49-54; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, p. 286.

<sup>72</sup> Millward, 'Invalid definitions, invalid responses', pp. 29-33.

<sup>73</sup> Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-7.

sheltered workshops remained a traditional form of charitable enterprise, the overall image of the voluntary sector was more acceptable to Labour and its potential benefits in delivering welfare more accepted.

Funding was also an important factor in the continuation of a mixed economy. As Chapter Three illustrated, the hoped-for profit from Remploy was not to occur, with the company instead always making a loss. Remploy was not unique in this regard but it was far more costly in direct terms for the government than the other providers, with the financial responsibility for Remploy held entirely by the Exchequer.<sup>74</sup> For LA and approved charitable undertakings, governments offered grants, the largest of which was a 'deficiency grant' which covered seventy-five per cent of the financial loss for a workshop for the year but was limited to a maximum amount.<sup>75</sup> This limit was £100 per disabled worker in 1956, which increased to £240 in 1961, and reached £430 the following decade.<sup>76</sup> The rest of the costs were borne by either the LA, as part of their overall welfare budget, or through the fundraising activities of the particular charity. In the case of those voluntary workshops operating on behalf of an LA, central government contributed fifty-per cent of the funding and the LA and charity twenty-five per cent each.<sup>77</sup> Central government therefore made only a contribution, alongside contributions from the charitable organisations or from LA budgets. There

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<sup>74</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), pp. 28-9.

<sup>75</sup> TNA LAB 43/268, MOL, 'Note on letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> May 1956' (1956); TNA LAB 20/1038, MOL, 'Employment in Sheltered Workshops: Conditions for the payment of grants and allowances to Voluntary Undertakings employment severely disabled persons' (November, 1961).

<sup>76</sup> TNA LAB 43/268, MOL, 'Note on letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> May 1956' (1956); TNA LAB 20/1038, MOL, 'Employment in Sheltered Workshops: Conditions for the payment of grants and allowances to Voluntary Undertakings employment severely disabled persons' (November, 1961); TNA LAB 20/1073, SEC, 'Provision of Sheltered Employment by Local Authorities and Voluntary Bodies' (November, 1962); TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), pp. 28-9; TNA LAB 20/1478, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: Dealings with Local Authorities' (1975).

<sup>77</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: Dealings with Local Authorities' (1975).

were also occasions where, owing to fundraising successes, charitable workshops required no grant at all.<sup>78</sup>

The direct cost of Remploy to government was therefore much greater. It is not possible to provide direct comparative information for the entire period, but there are a useful number of examples of this. The Piercy Report noted that for the financial year 1954/55, the MOL had provided financial support for LA workshops for blind persons totalling ‘approximately £367,000’ and for charitable workshops totalling ‘about £94,000’.<sup>79</sup> These workshops provided employment for almost 5,000 workers.<sup>80</sup> The cost of Remploy for the same period totalled £2,903,000, in support of 6,500 workers.<sup>81</sup> When calculated on a per-worker basis, we can see that the MOL was contributing £92 per worker for the year to LA and charitable workshops, compared to £447 per worker in Remploy. The evidence suggests that a significant difference in funding levels remained, as in the year 1973 the DE estimated that it had provided £8,436,000 to Remploy, compared with £2,956,000 for charitable and LA workshops.<sup>82</sup> If we take 8,000 employees for Remploy and 5,500 for the other workshops as a guide based on information from Table 6.3, this gives a cost per employee for the year of £1,054 for Remploy and £537 for other workshops.<sup>83</sup> Given this, it is perhaps easy to see why the mixed economy, with additional funding

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<sup>78</sup> See reports in TNA LAB 20/78.

<sup>79</sup> *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on The Rehabilitation Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 9883 (1956), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 21/07/2017).

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, ‘Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain’, (February, 1958), p. 13.

<sup>82</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: Estimated Division of Expenditure 1973/74’.

<sup>83</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, ‘Objectives and Criteria of Success: Appendix 5’ (1980), p. 73.

available from charitable donations or LA budgets, continued to prove an attractive option for successive governments.<sup>84</sup>

Related to this issue it is also possible to detect a degree of a loss of faith in the ability of Remploy to provide sheltered employment in a superior way to the other providers. Whilst this was mostly reflected simply in the financial results of Remploy, the key test for any company, there were also concerns about the running of the company itself. Remploy's management had first come under serious criticism in the Fourth Report of the Select Committee on Estimates in 1952, which was widely publicised and which was deemed by Remploy to have been 'disastrous' for the company's reputation.<sup>85</sup> As well as this bad publicity, and despite the MOL officially noting its support for Remploy, it is clear in some of the correspondence among MOL officials that doubts lingered about the capability of the company management.<sup>86</sup>

The increasing role for LA's in providing sheltered employment following the 1958 amendment to the DPEA appears also to be consistent with the growing role for LAs in delivering welfare generally.<sup>87</sup> This has recently been highlighted in the case of disabled people by Hampton who described the increasing, though varying, efforts of LAs to deliver welfare provision across the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, the system of LA and central government funding to voluntary organisations was not limited to

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<sup>84</sup> TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, 'Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain', (February, 1958), p. 13.

<sup>85</sup> *Fourth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates*, 162 (1952), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 18/06/2017). TNA LAB 20/653, 'Note of a Meeting between the Minister and the Board of Remploy Limited on 16<sup>th</sup> May' (16.05.1952); TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 8. See also TNA LAB 20/929.

<sup>86</sup> See Chapter Three and TNA LAB 20/929.

<sup>87</sup> Millward, 'Invalid definitions, invalid responses', pp. 29-33.

<sup>88</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 59-65.

sheltered employment, but was a common relationship, with a considerable number of charitable welfare organisations at least part-funded by government or LAs.<sup>89</sup> This funding model grew throughout the period, and as Gladstone noted, this increasing reliance on state funding ‘raised the issue of the independence’ of the voluntary sector.<sup>90</sup> In the case of sheltered employment there was a concurrent increase in regulation as this closer relationship developed. This was a softer frontier of the state, but an important one which saw the infringement, albeit limited, of central government on the independence of the charitable sector. The Piercy Report in 1956, whilst commending the role of voluntary workshops, maintained that the continued support of the MOL should be dependent on the ability of the workshops to provide ‘a service of good standard’, and that they remained open to inspection from MOL officials.<sup>91</sup> The standard was codified further and inspections formalised in a guide for sheltered workshops circulated in 1962.<sup>92</sup> This noted that grants were only available to those workshops approved by the MOL and that this approval was based on a number of conditions, such as providing ‘genuine employment’, paying wages, and providing a ‘normal’ forty hour week.<sup>93</sup> The organisation itself had to run the workshop ‘efficiently’, not take any profits away from the enterprise, and prove able to provide sufficient funding to meet its proportion of the costs.<sup>94</sup> As before, it was noted that the workshop ‘must be open to inspection by duly authorised officers of the

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<sup>89</sup> Brenton, *The Voluntary Sector in British Social Services*, p. 27; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 66-9; Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-7, 133-9.

<sup>90</sup> Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-7, 133-9; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 66-9.

<sup>91</sup> *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on The Rehabilitation Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 9883 (1956), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 21/07/2017).

<sup>92</sup> TNA LAB 20/1038, MOL, ‘Employment in Sheltered Workshops: Conditions for the payment of grants and allowances to Voluntary Undertakings employment severely disabled persons’ (November, 1961); TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), p. 14.

<sup>93</sup> TNA LAB 20/1038, MOL, ‘Employment in Sheltered Workshops: Conditions for the payment of grants and allowances to Voluntary Undertakings employment severely disabled persons’ (November, 1961).

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

Ministry of Labour’, and that approval was subject to review ‘from time to time’.<sup>95</sup> LA and charitable workshops were therefore subject to an assessment of standards if they were in receipt of government support and did not escape from pressure to improve workshop performance.<sup>96</sup> However, we should not overstate the state’s role in these workshops. Beyond this inspection and general monitoring, there is no evidence of any punitive action being taken against any workshop. The DE noted that in practice its control over LA and voluntary workshops had always been ‘limited’ and this was to remain the case throughout the period considered in this thesis and indeed beyond.<sup>97</sup>

As before, the form voluntary sheltered employment provision took continued to be varied. Appendix 7 illustrates the continued variations in the numbers of disabled people employed and the eligibility criteria which existed among approved voluntary workshops by 1965. In the majority of cases it appears that both charitable and LA workshops tended to cater for smaller numbers of workers than was typical in Remploy factories. In 1958, J. L. Edwards, an MOL official, claimed in his article on the development of Remploy, that as the company had focused its initial expansion on areas with high numbers of severely disabled people, there were by then few areas where ‘the concentration of suitable disabled unemployed is large enough’ to warrant large factories.<sup>98</sup> He noted that those workshops run by LAs or charities tended therefore, to focus on the remaining ‘relatively small local concentrations of disabled

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), p. 53.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 63; TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, ‘Co-operation in Sheltered Employment: Notes of a Meeting between Remploy and ESA’ (26.07.1976); TNA ET 2/32, MSC, ‘Sheltered Workshops: Guidelines for local authorities’ (1978). Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 71.

<sup>98</sup> TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, ‘Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain’ (February, 1958), pp. 14-15.



people’.<sup>99</sup> Though not absolute, this suggests something of a demarcation therefore, with Remploy’s initial expansion providing large-scale factories where there was shown to be large numbers of eligible employees, and LAs and charities then providing smaller scale workshops for smaller numbers.<sup>100</sup> This presents a tangible example of the non-statutory sector being a ‘junior partner’ in the mixed economy. According to the DE, by the 1970s LA and charitable workshops usually involved the provision for ‘30-40’ workers ‘in less predominantly industrial areas’.<sup>101</sup> Where demand was even smaller in rural or remote areas, sheltered employment was ‘almost entirely’ composed of charitable provision.<sup>102</sup> It is also apparent that no other sheltered employment scheme ever approached Remploy’s overall scale. Whereas Remploy operated a network of factories, the vast majority of LA and voluntary workshops were uncoordinated individual units.<sup>103</sup> The largest network outside Remploy belonged to Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops with five workshops at the start of the period, and two more in operation by 1965.<sup>104</sup>

Chapter Four has illustrated the reality of recruitment into Remploy, with recruitment based upon potential productivity rather than by particular groupings of disability or by ex-service status. Chapter Five indicated that whilst Remploy was male-dominated, women were not excluded from the company explicitly in terms of central policy. The situation for the other providers was more complex than this. In terms of independent voluntary workshops, they could limit recruitment however they wished

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), pp. 20, 30, 63.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., pp. 24, 30.

<sup>103</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, Remploy Limited, ‘Managing Director to Department of Employment’ (09.04.1975).

<sup>104</sup> See Appendix 6 and 7.

with many established to focus on particular ‘causes’ and therefore upon particular groups of people. Appendix 7 shows that whilst not to the same extent this did continue to be the case into the 1960s, with many independent voluntary organisations continuing to target specific groups in their provision. Thus, for example, the Scottish Council for Care of Spastics workshop provided solely for those with cerebral palsy, while the Yateley Industries for Disabled Girls catered only for women. There is also evidence to suggest that this continued into the following decade as well, as the DE noted that whilst some organisations catered ‘for all or most categories of disabled people’, charitable provision ‘typically’ involved catering for a specific group, again based around gender, disability or ex-service status.<sup>105</sup> Such establishments could also, like Remploy, employ non-Section II workers. Unlike Remploy however, they were not supposed to be subject to a maximum number, and how many Section I or non-disabled people were employed was ultimately down to the organisation itself.<sup>106</sup> Financial assistance from governments in this period however, was limited to a ‘per employee’ deficiency grant available only to Section II employees, meaning the organisation would have to fund such cases itself.<sup>107</sup> A key difference between charitable provision and Remploy in this mixed economy, therefore, was that it was often the case that charities continued to focus only upon particular groups of disabled people.

As to whether employees within such groups were then selected on a similar basis to Remploy, in terms of maximising productivity, there is something of a mixed picture.

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<sup>105</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), p. 21.

<sup>106</sup> TNA LAB 20/1038, MOL, ‘Employment in Sheltered Workshops: Conditions for the payment of grants and allowances to Voluntary Undertakings employment severely disabled persons’ (November, 1961).

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

Anderson suggested that charitable sheltered workshops ‘were not willing to accept lower standards of production from their workers’.<sup>108</sup> It is possible that a remark from the Lord Roberts Memorial Workshop in Fulham in 1951 that they were having difficulty in ‘finding suitable disabled men’ for light assembly woodwork, indicates that they were looking for a certain level of ability or productivity, though it is also possible this referred to ex-service personnel for whom the charity catered.<sup>109</sup> Certainly, the Piercy Report of 1956 had recommended that sheltered employment should be reserved for those that were capable of productive employment, and this applied to sheltered employment generally, not just Remploy. However, contrary to this, the DE noted that there had long been a widespread belief that LA and charitable workshops tended to employ the more severely disabled with a lower production capacity than did Remploy.<sup>110</sup> Similarly a Remploy Group Director, who worked closely with voluntary and LA workshops, suggested that those disabled people considered unable to meet Remploy’s productivity level were sometimes accepted by other workshops owing to their greater willingness ‘to accept additional low output personnel into their Workshops than is the case within Remploy’.<sup>111</sup> It appears therefore that while productivity could be a factor in recruitment, this was not generally considered to be to the same extent as was the case in Remploy.

In terms of the types of work undertaken in sheltered employment, as Appendix 8 indicates, many charitable workshops continued to rely on the so-called ‘traditional trades’ associated with sheltered employment such as toy-making, knitting, weaving,

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<sup>108</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, pp. 183-4.

<sup>109</sup> TNA LAB 20/78, MOL, ‘Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops Fulham Factory’ (February, 1951).

<sup>110</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), pp. 61-2.

<sup>111</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, ‘Group Director B.A.S: Entry Standard for Employment in Remploy’ (31.01.1975); Remploy Limited, ‘Note from Group Director BAS to Remploy MD: Entry Standard for Employment in Remploy’ (18.02.1975).

upholstery and basket-making. It is also apparent that LA workshops, having developed in the early-1960s, had adapted quickly to providing the so-called 'new trades', focusing primarily upon light engineering and carpentry. However, it is noticeable that even many of these designated 'new trades' appeared little different to those trades common in 1945, listed in Appendix 6. For both LA and voluntary workshops, the work undertaken appears to have determined by the perceived ability of the workers to carry out certain roles, and the local and independent nature of the workshops. In terms of the former, workshops typically engaged in work which 'usually calls for no special skill, or can be de-skilled so far as is necessary to employ severely disabled people'.<sup>112</sup> In terms of the latter, given that the majority of workshops operated independently, they were limited to local small orders of work with little to no need for capital investment and elaborate purchasing or marketing.<sup>113</sup>

In some respects this was different to Remploy, which attempted to focus upon national markets with standard product lines and was not, in principle, overly interested in local orders.<sup>114</sup> An example of the kind of production which Remploy was aiming for was the securing of sole manufacturing and sales rights for the Swedish *Lundia* shelving range, which remained a key product for the remainder of the period.<sup>115</sup> This development could only occur because of Remploy's size which allowed it 'to bear the risks and sustain the overheads involved in a national

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<sup>112</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), p. 25.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.; TNA LAB 20/78, MOL, 'Note of conversation with Miss Acton' (09.09.1950); TNA LAB 20/1144, MOL, 'Borough of Swindon Enterprise Work Inspection Report' (July, 1966).

<sup>114</sup> TNA BM 10/1, Remploy Limited, 'A Review of the working of the Company during its first seven years' (March, 1953), pp. 7-8.

<sup>115</sup> TNA BM10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), p. 21.

marketing operation'.<sup>116</sup> However, as has been noted in Chapter Three, this attempt to focus on a national market was not always successful, especially in Remploy's early existence, with work scarce, many factories engaged in whatever work could be found, with numerous report of factory managers sourcing local work in the same way as other workshops continued to do.<sup>117</sup> Even once Remploy was organised into trade groupings with standard product lines from the 1950s onwards, there remained continued variation in the precise type of trade in factories. Work was never secure and given the nature of the company was always in demand. Therefore we see some of the traditional trades, such as the 'brush and broom trade' undertaken by charitable workshops continue in Remploy factories as well, either because of a shortage of work or because it was considered more suitable for the employees.<sup>118</sup> It is not clear therefore how much of a difference between a national operation like Remploy and the smaller local contracts undertaken in other workshops was felt on the production floor itself.

It is also apparent that other providers, in common with Remploy, faced certain commercial pressures. Though charities and LAs provided sheltered employment more explicitly as a form of welfare than was the case with Remploy, the need to be as productive as possible within this remit still held some importance to help fund the workshops. The Lord Roberts Memorial Workshop's records reveal struggles with similar issues to Remploy, such as the securing of work and productivity issues which

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<sup>116</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), p. 25.

<sup>117</sup> See Chapter Three; TNA BM 10/2, Remploy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Remploy Limited' (May, 1979), which describes the period as one in which the company was 'feeling around for suitable trades'.

<sup>118</sup> TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, 'Remploy in the Long-Term: Appendix 10' (28.02.1977).

required further deficiency grants from the MOL.<sup>119</sup> As with Remploy they attempted to manufacture products efficiently and operate in ‘open competition with other commercial undertakings’.<sup>120</sup> They similarly hoped to turn a profit, ‘which will be ploughed back towards the cost of additional machinery or increased wages’.<sup>121</sup> The financial situation of all workshops was monitored by the MOL and its successors and there were concerns raised on a number of occasions about their economic sustainability.<sup>122</sup> As the DE noted, such commercial difficulties were common to both Remploy and the other providers and were largely ‘inherent in the concept of sheltered employment’.<sup>123</sup> Though not under the same pressure as Remploy, LA and charitable workshops in receipt of government funds were not immune from calls to increase commercial efficiency, with the DE continuing to stress the importance of improving the economic performance of such workshops.<sup>124</sup>

With the full expansion of Remploy as initially envisaged having being abandoned, alternative provision in sheltered employment increased and remained throughout the period, irrespective of changes in government. Such provision proved cost-effective for central government and conformed to the pattern for support for a mixed economy in welfare more generally. This included voluntary organisations, some new, some continued from before the war, and an increasing role for undertakings operated by LAs both independently and in partnership. The result was a ‘tripartite mixed

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<sup>119</sup> TNA LAB 20/78, MOL, ‘Note of conversation with Miss Acton’ (09.09.1950).

<sup>120</sup> TNA LAB 20/78, ‘The Forces Help Society and Lord Roberts Workshops Gazette, Vol L, No. 1’ (January, 1950); The Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops, ‘Note from Miss Acton’ (14.07.1948).

<sup>121</sup> TNA LAB 20/78, ‘The Forces Help Society and Lord Roberts Workshops Gazette, Vol L, No. 1’ (January, 1950).

<sup>122</sup> *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on The Rehabilitation Training and Resettlement of Disabled Persons*, 9883 (1956), <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers> (accessed 21/07/2017); TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), pp. 53-5; TNA LAB 20/1462, NACED, ‘Sheltered Employment Annual Report’ (1975).

<sup>123</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), pp. 53-5.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

economy' in sheltered employment comprising Remploy, LA's and the voluntary sector. This section has illustrated the wide variation in the provision of sheltered employment among LAs and voluntary bodies, and some of the key differences between these providers and Remploy. The mixed economy therefore included a range of sheltered employment, varying greatly in terms of size, scope and working conditions.

### The National Consultation and Question of Unification, 1970-1979

This tripartite mixed economy of sheltered employment came to be seriously questioned during a process of national consultation on sheltered employment in the 1970s.<sup>125</sup> This was instigated by the Conservative government elected in 1970 under Edward Heath, as part of a wider reorganisation of central and local government designed to modernise and 'make public administration more dynamic'.<sup>126</sup> This included the restructuring of the employment service, with the formation of two new agencies to implement policy, the Employment Services Agency (ESA) and the Training Services Agency, alongside the creation in 1973 of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC), containing both sides of industry, which was given responsibility for manpower policy.<sup>127</sup> The Local Authority Social Service Act of 1970, the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, and the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 further increased the role of LAs in regards to disabled people across a range of provision such as 'social workers, occupational therapists, residential and day centre facilities, holidays, meals on wheels, respite services and

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p. 2, which notes that the subject had not been examined since the Piercy Report of 1956.

<sup>126</sup> Dorey, *British Politics Since 1945*, p. 85; Hill, *The Welfare State in Britain*, p. 103.

<sup>127</sup> Hill, *The Welfare State in Britain*, p. 103.

disability aids and adaptations'.<sup>128</sup> Local government itself was reorganised following the passing of the Local Government Act 1972, which resulted in a major reorganisation of LAs in England and Wales.<sup>129</sup> During this process, the Executive Council of County Councils Association asked for clarity as to its role in providing sheltered employment.<sup>130</sup> As a result, the DE published and distributed a Consultative Document in 1973 on the future of sheltered employment, which was followed by a period of discussion over the following two years. During the course of this consultation period, there was a change of government, with a Labour government replacing Heath's in 1974. With Labour having moved to the Left following its defeat in 1970, touting an agenda of further nationalisation and a promise of a comprehensive employment service for disabled people, the possibility was raised for a fundamental change in sheltered employment provision at this time.<sup>131</sup>

The DE's Consultative Document produced in 1973, outlined the 'increasing difficulty' in operating the current tripartite system and the various options for sheltered employment going forward.<sup>132</sup> Contrary to the image portrayed by Edwards in his article, of Remploy and the other providers together forming a cohesive overall sheltered employment system, the Consultative Document revealed the various problems which had developed in the mixed economy over the preceding years which

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<sup>128</sup> Roulstone and Prideaux, *Understanding Disability Policy*, p. 37.

<sup>129</sup> Younghusband, *Social Work in Britain*, pp. 247-8.

<sup>130</sup> TNA BM 3/47, Remploy Limited, 'Group Director B.A.S: Entry Standard for Employment in Remploy: Appendix A' (31.01.1975); TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), p. 2. Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-7; J. A. Chandler, *Explaining Local Government: Local Government in Britain since 1800* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 201-5.

<sup>131</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 145; Kavanagh and Morris, *Consensus Politics*, pp. 28-9.

<sup>132</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), pp. 69-70.



had prevented this from happening.<sup>133</sup> Chiefly this was the result of a continued lack of cooperation among the various providers. With difficult trading conditions a common problem since the Second World War, the competition for work between the providers had continued. This was still most keenly felt in terms of government contracts, with the Consultative Document noting that over the preceding years, by virtue of its 'large integrated labour force and its national buying and contract organisation', Remploy had remained 'paramount' in the awarding of such contracts, much to the chagrin of other workshops.<sup>134</sup> This competition appears to have developed into mutual antipathy and even hostility between Remploy and the charitable and LA workshops. The Consultative Document noted an example of a case where an LA had flatly refused a proposal to share workshop space with Remploy.<sup>135</sup> Such conflict was most acute in relations between Remploy and the other providers, but there were also problems in terms of the relationships between LAs and voluntary bodies, since the former had a duty to provide sheltered employment for disabled people generally, whereas the latter usually existed to support a particular group, which could lead to issues where they combined to provide workshops.<sup>136</sup>

With little cooperation and coordination between the providers, the result was an uneven distribution of sheltered employment throughout the country. The initial discussions during the formation of Remploy had warned against the duplication of service between Remploy and other workshops resulting from a lack of

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<sup>133</sup> TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, 'Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain' (February, 1958), p. 14.

<sup>134</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), p. 27.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 62-3.

coordination.<sup>137</sup> However, this was highlighted as a key problem in the Consultative Document, which noted no less than thirty-eight instances of duplications of service, with a Remploy factory and another workshop located in the same district.<sup>138</sup> As well as being uneconomic, this also created an uneven system with some localities having multiple workshops, and others none at all, highlighting the limitation of the kind of demarcation suggested by Edwards.<sup>139</sup> To a degree this was unavoidable in the case of independent charitable provision which varied greatly based on the resources, aims and whims of the bodies directing them.<sup>140</sup> Indeed, this problem of ‘unequal geographical coverage’ has been noted as a common critique of charitable organisations in the period generally.<sup>141</sup> More coordination might be expected however, from Remploy and LAs in terms of how they positioned themselves to serve the locality.<sup>142</sup> However, with the mutual distrust and lack of cooperation, in practice this coordination was virtually non-existent, and as a result there was no cohesive system of coverage.<sup>143</sup>

This also highlighted the lack of a uniform experience of sheltered employment, as two disabled people in the same area could experience vastly different working

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<sup>137</sup> TNA LAB 20/108, MOL, ‘Employment under Special Conditions: Outline of a Scheme under Section 15 of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944’ (June, 1944).

<sup>138</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), pp. 85-6; TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, ‘Remploy in the Long-Term, Appendix 2: Remploy in Sheltered Employment in the U.K.’ (22.04.1977); TNA BM 8/79, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirty-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (13.09.1975).

<sup>139</sup> TNA BM 8/79, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirty-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (13.09.1975); TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, ‘Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain’ (February, 1958), pp. 14-5.

<sup>140</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), p. 24.

<sup>141</sup> Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, p. 89; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, p. 277.

<sup>142</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), pp. 20, 30.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 63, 70-1.

conditions depending on the type of workshop they worked in.<sup>144</sup> This chapter has highlighted the huge variation among charitable and LA workshops in terms of who they employed and their working conditions. Thus the DE noted that disabled workers in one workshop ‘cannot help but wonder whether they are not perhaps being inequitably dealt with’.<sup>145</sup> Remploi in particular advocated the benefits of disabled workers having ‘the same general conditions’ regardless of location, which of course they felt uniquely placed to provide.<sup>146</sup> This thesis has already demonstrated that Remploi factories were in reality far from uniform, but they were undoubtedly more so than was the case with the other disparate providers. A particular concern expressed by the DE in this regard was the variation and levels of wages in many workshops. As was illustrated in the previous chapter, Remploi’s wages were initially negotiated with the unions of the various trades undertaken, with a reduction to reflect the decreased productivity of the disabled workers, which was then followed by a standard Remploi wage. Wages paid to disabled employees in voluntary and LA workshops varied considerably across the various providers. Appendix 9 provides an indication of the range of wages in both voluntary and LA workshops, and the basis on which they were calculated. Despite repeated calls from the DE and Remploi for a unified wage structure across sheltered employment, this variation continued throughout the period, with the DE expressing concern that ‘the wages paid in some voluntary body workshops are extremely low’.<sup>147</sup> The DE recommended workshops follow the Remploi rates, but ultimately the wage structure was determined in each

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<sup>144</sup> TNA BM 8/79, Remploi Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Thirty-Third Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (13.09.1975); TNA BM 3/54, Remploi Limited, ‘Remploi in the Long-Term, Appendix 2: Remploi in Sheltered Employment in the U.K.’ (22.04.1977).

<sup>145</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), p. 62.

<sup>146</sup> TNA BM 3/54, Remploi Limited, ‘Remploi in the Long-Term, Appendix 2: Remploi in Sheltered Employment in the U.K.’ (22.04.1977); TNA LAB 20/1478, Remploi Limited, ‘Managing Director to Department of Employment’ (09.04.1975).

<sup>147</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, ‘Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document’ (October, 1973), p. 28; TNA BM 3/54, Remploi Limited, ‘Remploi in the Long-Term’ (22.04.1977), p. 9.

case by the agencies concerned, and therefore variation continued.<sup>148</sup> The Consultative Document concluded that the tripartite structure was dysfunctional, and had resulted in the uneven distribution of workshops, confusion over financing, differing wages for workers, and protracted negotiations, discussions and compromises in planning.<sup>149</sup>

Having outlined such problems, the Consultative Document then made it clear that the view of the DE was that the unification of sheltered employment under a single authority was necessary.<sup>150</sup> To this end, the DE offered two possible systems of unified sheltered employment in its proposals. One involved the devolution of responsibility for sheltered employment to local government, and the other would bring all sheltered employment under central government control.<sup>151</sup> The first option would see all sheltered workshops operated by LAs. Remploy would then operate as a National Agency, funded entirely by the LAs, which would work on behalf of them to provide management consultancy and other services such as marketing, product development and sales.<sup>152</sup> All charitable workshops would have to act as agents of the LAs to continue to receive funding.<sup>153</sup> The benefits of this proposal outlined by the DE related to the current responsibilities of the LAs, the fundamentally local nature of sheltered workshops and the potential for a comprehensive integration with other welfare services.<sup>154</sup> Such a proposal was also noted to be in accordance with the Heath government's policy 'that local matters should be settled locally and that more

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<sup>148</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), p. 28; TNA LAB 20/1462, NACED, 'Sheltered Employment, Numbers in Employment' (31.03.1975).

<sup>149</sup> TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document' (October, 1973), pp. 63, 70-2.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 69-72.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 75-6.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 85-6.

responsibility should devolve on local authorities; and also with the Government's objectives in establishing fewer and stronger authorities on reorganisation'.<sup>155</sup> The second option would see central government control of all aspects of sheltered employment, with the expansion of Remploy to perform the role.<sup>156</sup> Under this system Remploy would take over all other workshops, with independent charitable workshops who wished to continue being funded, working as agents of the company.<sup>157</sup> The benefits of such a national scheme to streamlined planning, uniform employment conditions and wages, and a cohesive industrial strategy were noted, with Remploy's position as the only example of such an operation highlighted.<sup>158</sup> Both options involved the placing of voluntary workshops under the remit of either local or central government. The political implications of these options in terms of funding, was not considered in the document, which was limited to raising these possibilities for discussion.

The Consultative Document led to protracted discussions involving Remploy, LAs, government ministers, the NACED, the MSC, the TUC, the Confederation of British Industry, the National Association of Industries for the Blind and Disabled (NAIBD), and the National League of the Blind and Disabled (NLBD), with the DE attempting to balance the various viewpoints.<sup>159</sup> It is important to note that these discussions did include a voice for disabled people themselves in such discussions for the first time, though this was limited to only two organisations, the NAIBD and the NLBD. The move away from the traditional paternalistic advocacy for disabled people by 'well-

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>159</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, 'Note from N. Covington, DE "The Future of Sheltered Employment"' (26.03.1975); MSC, 'Sheltered Employment: Paper by the Secretariat'.

meaning' non-disabled people, has been noted as a key development in the period.<sup>160</sup> This engagement with the relevant communities targeted by welfare appears to be a common feature across services and was intended to provide a 'counterweight to the "top-down" nature of the statutory welfare state'.<sup>161</sup> That only two such organisations were consulted illustrates that adequate representation still had some way to go, but it does represent a notable step in this direction.

Whilst broad agreement was reached in these discussions on the desirability to unify sheltered employment, there was deep disagreement on how this should be achieved.<sup>162</sup> Perhaps predictably, Remploy favoured unification under central government, and LAs unification under themselves, and each strongly opposed the other scheme.<sup>163</sup> These discussions clearly highlight the divisions which had developed between Remploy and the other providers. Despite agreement that a unified service was preferable and beneficial, neither party would countenance the other operating such a system.<sup>164</sup> It is impossible to ignore a sense of mutual distrust and enmity between Remploy and the representatives of the other providers in the

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<sup>160</sup> Millward, 'Invalid definitions, invalid responses', pp. 29-33.

<sup>161</sup> Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 66-9.

<sup>162</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, MSC, 'Sheltered Employment: Paper by the Secretariat'; Confederation of British Industry, 'Note to Mr Covington "Sheltered Employment for Disabled People"' (28.05.1974); TUC, 'Note to Mr Fair "Sheltered Employment for Disabled People"' (15.08.1974); DE, 'Sheltered Employment: Note of a meeting with Representatives of The National League of the Blind and Disabled' (24.03.1975); Association of Metropolitan Authorities, 'Note to Department of Employment "Sheltered Employment"' (06.03.1975); Association of County Councils, 'Note to Department of Employment "The Future of Sheltered Employment"' (27.02.1975).

<sup>163</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, Remploy Limited, 'Managing Director to Department of Employment' (09.04.1975).

<sup>164</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, MSC, 'Sheltered Employment: Paper by the Secretariat'; Confederation of British Industry, 'Note to Mr Covington "Sheltered Employment for Disabled People"' (28.05.1974); TUC, 'Note to Mr Fair "Sheltered Employment for Disabled People"' (15.08.1974); DE, 'Sheltered Employment: Note of a meeting with Representatives of The National League of the Blind and Disabled' (24.03.1975); Association of Metropolitan Authorities, 'Note to Department of Employment "Sheltered Employment"' (06.03.1975); Association of County Councils, 'Note to Department of Employment "The Future of Sheltered Employment"' (27.02.1975).

discussions with the DE over the consultation period.<sup>165</sup> The justifications utilised for each side as to why they should take over a unified system reveal some of the opinions they had of each other. Remply's criticism of LA control of sheltered employment centred around the lack of focus on sheltered employment when compared to their other welfare responsibilities; a lack of expertise amongst social work officials, particularly in terms of the commercial necessities of operating a large sheltered employment scheme; and a lack of unity amongst the LAs that would result in a 'chaotic and fragmented system'.<sup>166</sup> Under LA control, Remply felt that sheltered employment would be reduced 'to a shambles, operated...by a large number of independent and unskilled local authorities'.<sup>167</sup> The LAs chief criticism of Remply was its focus on commercial efficiency and tendency to demand maximum productivity from workers, rejecting those unable to meet a high 'industrial tempo', rather than focusing on welfare.<sup>168</sup>

Remply outlined their own argument for control in a document called 'The Remply View', emphasising their experience of largely performing such a role already.<sup>169</sup> However, according to the DE, this proposal 'had virtually no support outside Remply', and indeed was 'strongly opposed in some important quarters'.<sup>170</sup> What these 'important quarters' were was not mentioned. The Remply reply to the DE assessment questioned the reasoning behind this opposition, 'and if these reasons are

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<sup>165</sup> See TNA LAB 20/1478.

<sup>166</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, Remply Limited, 'Managing Director to Department of Employment' (09.04.1975).

<sup>167</sup> TNA BM 3/54, Remply Limited, 'The Remply View' (February, 1974), p. 25.

<sup>168</sup> See for example, TNA LAB 20/1478, Association of Metropolitan Authorities & Association of County Councils, 'Sheltered Employment – Local Government and the Future of Remply' (February, 1975).

<sup>169</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, Remply Limited, 'Managing Director to Department of Employment' (09.04.1975); TNA BM 3/54, Remply Limited, 'Remply in the Long-Term, Appendix 2: Remply in Sheltered Employment in the U.K.' (22.04.1977).

<sup>170</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, DE, 'Note from Mrs Kent, "Sheltered Employment"' (12.03.1975); DE, 'Note from N. Covington, "The Future of Sheltered Employment"' (26.03.1975).

based on the up-to-date situation'.<sup>171</sup> That there was something of a loss of faith in Remploy's management has already been noted and this perception appears to have influenced these discussions. The result was that even while it remained technically an option under discussion, a DE official revealed in correspondence that 'at official level in the Department we no longer regard this as a serious contender'.<sup>172</sup>

Proposals for LA control were also put forward, stressing their current responsibilities for social services and the local flexibility such a scheme would afford.<sup>173</sup> As with Remploy, the DE noted that the proposals had 'no support outside local authorities'.<sup>174</sup> With both initial options considered unworkable, the Department was left with the option of either maintaining the status quo, or to follow the suggestion made by the NACED that responsibility should be given to the MSC to oversee the different providers of sheltered employment.<sup>175</sup> Thus the existing mixed economy would continue, but with a body providing a measure of overview and facilitating coordination and cooperation. This proposal was accepted by the DE, and the final decision was announced in the Commons in December 1975 by Labour's Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Employment, Harold Walker.<sup>176</sup> Noting the agreement that a unified system would be advantageous, but that 'no form of unification...would command sufficiently widespread support', it was decided that

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<sup>171</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, Remploy Limited, 'Managing Director to Department of Employment' (09.04.1975).

<sup>172</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, DE, 'Note from N. Covington, "The Future of Sheltered Employment"' (26.03.1975).

<sup>173</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, Association of County Councils, 'Secretary to Department of Employment "The Future of Sheltered Employment"' (27.02.1975); DE, 'Note from N. Covington, "The Future of Sheltered Employment"' (26.03.1975).

<sup>174</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, DE, 'Note from Mrs Kent, "Sheltered Employment"' (12.03.1975); DE, 'Note from N. Covington, "The Future of Sheltered Employment"' (26.03.1975).

<sup>175</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, DE, 'Note from N. Covington, "The Future of Sheltered Employment"' (26.03.1975); DE, 'Note from Mrs Kent "Sheltered Employment"' (12.03.1975); DE, 'Review of Policies and Services for Disabled People' (09.06.1975), pp. 1-3.

<sup>176</sup> TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, 'Remploy in the Long-Term, Appendix 3: Managing Director's Bulletin' (11.12.1975).



the present tripartite system would remain.<sup>177</sup> This continuation of a mixed economy under Labour was also consistent with wider welfare. Once in power the Party had curbed its expectations for further state expansion, and with the climate of economic crisis which pervaded much of its term removing the economic growth upon which expansion was predicated, the mixed economy remained largely untouched.<sup>178</sup> The end result of the process was thus the transfer of administration of sheltered employment under the tripartite system to the MSC with an aim to engender closer cooperation between the various providers.<sup>179</sup>

By the mid-1970s therefore, there continued to be a diverse mix of sheltered employment outside of Remploy, as can be seen in Table 6.2. There were similar numbers of workshops run independently by LAs and voluntary organisations, employing similar numbers of people, as well as a number of agency relationships and the inclusion of a significant number of sighted people in blind workshops.<sup>180</sup> Although there were isolated reports of some workshops having to reduce their workforce ‘owing to lack of work’, the overall trend for non-Remploy provision was growth.<sup>181</sup> LAs in particular increased their role, and the SEC’s annual report for 1975 revealed that many LAs were expanding the capacity of current provision or creating new workshops.<sup>182</sup> A mixed economy in sheltered employment continued therefore, with Remploy remaining, as the MSC noted, only a ‘part’ of this overall provision.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Kavanagh and Morris, *Consensus Politics*, pp. 28-9; Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, p. 65.

<sup>179</sup> TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, ‘Remploy in the Long-Term, Appendix 3: Managing Director’s Bulletin’ (11.12.1975).

<sup>180</sup> TNA LAB 20/1073, NACED, ‘Sheltered Employment Committee Reports’; TNA LAB 20/1462, NACED, ‘Sheltered Employment Annual Report’ (1975).

<sup>181</sup> TNA LAB 20/1462, NACED, ‘Sheltered Employment Annual Report’ (1975).

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> TNA BM 8/79, Remploy Limited, ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Forty-Seventh Meeting of the Board of Directors’ (16.12.1976); ‘Minutes of the Three Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Meeting of the

Table 6.3 reveals, however, that while provision among other providers continued to grow, as with other forms of welfare, the voluntary sector remained the ‘junior partner’ in the post-war mixed economy.<sup>184</sup> The majority of sheltered employment continued to be provided through central government in the form of Remploy.

**Table 6.2: Sheltered Workshops excluding Remploy, 1975.**

<b>Organisation Type</b>	<b>No. of Factories/Units</b>	<b>Number in Employment (Sighted)</b>
LA (Sighted)	28	1014
LA (Blind)	29	400
Charity acting as agents for LA's (Sighted)	7	272
Charity acting as agents for LA's (Blind)	27	275
Independent Charity (Sighted)	26	1123
<b>TOTAL</b>	117	3,084

Source: TNA LAB 20/1462, NACED, ‘Sheltered Employment Annual Report’ (1975).

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Board of Directors’ (20.03.1975); TNA BM 10/48, DE, ‘Finding Employment for Handicapped Young People’ (1979).

<sup>184</sup> Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, p. 89.

**Table 6.3: Number of Sighted Disabled Workers in Sheltered Employment, 1970-1978.**

Year	Section II disabled people in Workshops		Section II disabled people (sighted) in Blind workshops	Total	Section II registered unemployed <sup>185</sup>
	Remploy	LA & Voluntary			
1970	7,505	2,132	493	10,130	10,013
1971	7,518	2,193	555	10,266	11,120
1972	7,746	2,303	577	10,626	12,105
1973	7,959	2,505	660	11,124	11,164
1974	8,077	2,638	639	11,354	10,989
1975	8,308	2,495	675	11,478	11,101
1976	8,514	2,538	690	11,742	11,457
1977	7,972	2,682	728	11,382	10,901
1978	7,894	2,800	777	11,471	9,719

Sources: TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success: Appendix 5 and Appendix 6' (July, 1980); TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document: Table VIII Section II Register 1963-73' (October, 1973). Mr. Harold Walker, *Hansard* (20.03.1975), vol.888, cc.536-42w. TNA BM 10/34, Remploy Limited, 'Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploy, Table II' (June, 1981), p. 13.

Though the unification of sheltered employment failed, attempts were made to foster far closer cooperation between the various sheltered employment providers.<sup>186</sup> This had begun during the consultative process itself, with Remploy's senior management expressing a wish to develop 'closer and closer relations' with LA and charitable bodies.<sup>187</sup> In an effort to help 'break the ice', Remploy carried out 'Operation Information' during 1974 and 1975, inviting LA Directors of Social Services to Remploy factories and providing information about Remploy factories to LAs and

<sup>185</sup> For 1970-73, TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document: Table VIII Section II Register 1963-73' (October, 1973). For 1974, Mr. Harold Walker, *Hansard* (20.03.1975), vol. 888, cc. 536-42w. For 1975-76, TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success: Appendix 6' (July, 1980). For 1977-78, TNA BM 10/34, Remploy Limited, 'Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Remploy, Table II' (June, 1981), p. 13.

<sup>186</sup> TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, 'Remploy in the Long-Term, Appendix 3: Managing Director's Bulletin' (11.12.1975).

<sup>187</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, Remploy Limited, 'Managing Director to Department of Employment' (09.04.1975).

voluntary bodies.<sup>188</sup> Some LAs responded to this, with seventy-three Directors of Social Services and their colleagues taking up the invitation to visit in 1974, and ‘17 County Authorities, 6 Metropolitan Country Authorities and 15 Voluntary Societies’ requesting information on the company.<sup>189</sup> Following the consultative process, the Remploy Managing Director again reiterated the company’s willingness to foster ‘the closest cooperation between all those concerned with sheltered employment’.<sup>190</sup> LAs and charitable organisations also showed some willingness, liaising with the ESA to establish a discussion group involving representatives from the different providers to promote closer cooperation.<sup>191</sup>

Such efforts appear to have generated little tangible result. The ESA noted the difficulty in getting the various providers of sheltered employment to take real action to cooperate and remove themselves from ‘entrenched positions’.<sup>192</sup> The LA and voluntary bodies feared the loss of their autonomy, and many remained reticent of working with Remploy.<sup>193</sup> There was a ‘continued existence of suspicion’ among the other providers that any co-operation would see Remploy take a preferential place.<sup>194</sup> The result was that calls for closer co-operation continued for the remainder of the period, with virtually nothing constructively achieved.<sup>195</sup> By the end of the period

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<sup>188</sup> TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, ‘Remploy in the Long-Term, Appendix 2: Remploy in Sheltered Employment in the U.K.’ (22.04.1977).

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, Remploy Limited, ‘Managing Director to Department of Employment’ (09.04.1975); TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, ‘Remploy in the Long-Term, Appendix 3: Managing Director’s Bulletin’ (11.12.1975).

<sup>191</sup> TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, ‘Co-operation in Sheltered Employment: Notes of a Meeting between Remploy and ESA’ (26.07.1976); Remploy Limited, ‘Remploy in the Long-Term, Appendix 2: Remploy in Sheltered Employment in the U.K.’ (22.04.1977).

<sup>192</sup> TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, ‘Co-operation in Sheltered Employment: Notes of a Meeting between Remploy and ESA’ (26.07.1976).

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> TNA LAB 20/1478, DE, ‘Review of Policies and Services for Disabled People’ (09.06.1975), p. 7; TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, ‘Remploy in the Long-Term’ (22.04.1977), p. 2; TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, ‘Company Objectives and Criteria of Financial Success’ (July, 1980), p. 57; TNA

Remploy's Hailey Report noted that the company continue to be damned as being 'too professional' by other organisations, who 'almost without exception' held Remploy in 'low esteem'.<sup>196</sup> With little real cooperation and coordination between the providers, the result was that the uneven distribution of sheltered employment throughout the country, and the wide-variability in conditions, continued as before.<sup>197</sup>

### Conclusions

The analysis undertaken here has revealed the existence and composition of the mixed economy of sheltered employment in the post-war period for the first time. It has been demonstrated that sheltered employment, as with other areas of welfare provision identified by scholars, operated throughout the period of the classic welfare state as a mixed economy. Remploy was therefore not the single meaningful provider of sheltered employment which has often been assumed. Instead the company operated as the 'senior' partner in a tripartite mixed economy of sheltered employment, alongside workshops provided by voluntary organisations and LAs, both independently and in concert. The voluntary sector in sheltered employment survived the Second World War and the increase in statutory welfare which followed, to become a 'junior partner', while LAs took on an increasing role. Examination of this mixed economy reveals some of the common aspects among providers, as well as areas where Remploy operated, or attempted to operate, differently. In this way the

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BM 8/80, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Three Hundred and Eightieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (20.12.1979).

<sup>196</sup> TNA BM 10/48, Remploy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success' (July, 1980), pp. 56-7; TNA BM 8/80, Remploy Limited, 'Minutes of the Three Hundred and Eightieth Meeting of the Board of Directors' (20.12.1979).

<sup>197</sup> TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, 'Remploy in the Long-Term, Appendix 2: Remploy in Sheltered Employment in the U.K.' (22.04.1977).

case of sheltered employment supports the current wider understanding of a mixed economy of welfare in the period.<sup>198</sup>

In examining Remploy as the moving frontier of the state, it has been demonstrated that the understanding of how sheltered employment should be provided did not remain static, but changed over time. Upon its creation the company was positioned as *the* sheltered employment provider which would take over much, if not all, of sheltered employment, and set a new standard in efficiency and effectiveness. In this way, the case of Remploy illustrates that, contrary to the view of Hampton, some aspects of disability provision did reflect the expansion of the state into areas of welfare undertaken by the initial Attlee government.<sup>199</sup> This period of expansion of the frontier proved to be short lived. Over the course of subsequent governments, as with other areas of welfare, a truly mixed economy was established and maintained. In part this was due to ideology, with the limits of the state to solve all social problems and the merits of voluntarism, sincerely believed in by Conservative governments, also becoming accepted by Labour when in power. As a result, the continuation of a mixed economy became somewhat common ground for both major parties in government, and this is evident in the case of sheltered employment as in welfare more generally. It is also apparent that the economic benefits to the Treasury of moving some of the burden to LAs and charitable organisations was a further important factor when weighed against the costs of supporting Remploy.

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<sup>198</sup> Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-7, 133-9; Finlayson, *Citizen, State and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990*; Younghusband, *Social Work in Britain*; Taylor, 'Voluntary action and the state', p. 215; Prochaska, *The Voluntary Impulse*; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, p. 277.

<sup>199</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 57.

Despite this support for the mixed economy, there were clearly a number of problems in its application which by the 1970s could no longer be ignored. This was coupled with a political climate open to further provision for disabled people and a reorganisation of government departments. The result was that the unification of sheltered employment under a single authority was raised as a serious idea with real support. This failed however, in large part due to mistrust and disagreement about how it should be achieved. No providers wished to relinquish control of sheltered employment to the other. Thus unification under either central or local government failed and the tripartite structure endured. A truly mixed economy was to remain in place.

In his article on Remploy in 1958, the MOL official, Edwards suggested that Remploy operated seamlessly alongside the other providers to deliver a cohesive and comprehensive scheme of sheltered employment for the severely disabled.<sup>200</sup> Despite employing an increasing number of severely disabled people during the period, Chapter Four has already indicated that neither Remploy itself, nor the mixed economy of sheltered employment as a whole, succeeded in providing ‘full employment’ for all those eligible. The deep divisions among the providers of sheltered employment highlight that the mixed economy did not combine to deliver a cohesive sheltered employment service. Wide variations existed across the tripartite providers with workshops varying in terms of size, scope and working conditions. With no meaningful cooperation across providers, it is apparent that a disabled person’s experience of sheltered employment would vary widely. This thesis has already shown that Remploy was not the cohesive catch-all scheme that has been

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<sup>200</sup> TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, ‘Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain’ (February, 1958), p. 14.

assumed, and here it is evident that this was also the case for sheltered employment in the mixed economy, which was characterised by competition, variations in coverage and conditions, and conflict.



## **Chapter Seven**

### **Conclusion**

In providing the first detailed examination of Remploy and sheltered employment in the period 1944-1979, this thesis has challenged existing views, revealed a number of misconceptions, and illuminated the fundamental elements of how such provision functioned and was understood. In so doing, this thesis has shed a further light on disability in the post-war period and added the case of sheltered employment to a range of existing key debates about the classic welfare state.

In terms of the creation of the company, this thesis has challenged all existing conceptions. Importantly, it was clearly not intended, as some such as Bolderson and Borsay suggested, simply as a means of segregating unproductive workers in order to placate industry and thereby ease the acceptance of the others measures of the DPEA.<sup>1</sup> A scheme of state-run sheltered employment was a point of campaign for a number of groups representing disabled people in the inter-war period, and the records examined in this thesis attest to a seemingly genuine belief in those most involved in its creation, that it was in the best interest of, and desired by, the disabled people it was designed to serve. In the context of this period, it is therefore a mistake to see Remploy as part of a narrative of deliberate discrimination. At a time when the realistic alternative, based upon the lessons learned in the aftermath of the previous war, appeared to be large-scale unemployment for these severely disabled people, sheltered employment was considered a valid and beneficial service to provide.

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<sup>1</sup> Bolderson, *Social Security, Disability and Rehabilitation*, pp. 109-110; Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy In Britain Since 1750*. See also Humphries and Gordon, *Out of Sight*, p. 138; Wheatcroft, *Worth Saving*, pp. 168-70.

Furthermore, it is clear that Remploy was not simply a spontaneous reaction to the Second World War. Rather, longer-term developments and the war itself were factors alongside the central importance of the individual drive of Bevin to see the scheme first into the DPEA and then into formation. In terms of the wider debate over the factors which led to the welfare state, the creation of Remploy has thus been shown not to sit at the extreme end of the scale in supporting Titmuss' view of the primacy of the Second World War, but rather to be in support of the current acceptance of a range of factors, including, but not limited, to the war, as important in establishing the post-war settlement.<sup>2</sup> As well as correcting the popular notion of the company's creation, this conclusion also highlights a need to look beyond the timeframes of wars, and the two World Wars in particular, in considering developments in disability policy.

It is also evident that Remploy was not created with a pre-determined purpose fully established, beyond a general conception of providing a national scheme of sheltered employment. With nothing comparable in existence, it was not until the Board of Directors held their first meeting in 1945 that the many issues in attempting to establish such a scheme were really considered. The opinion expressed in the first issue of *Remploy News* was well justified in noting that the company 'was something entirely new to the industrial world and we had, therefore, to learn by experience. There were no precedents to follow; no textbooks to guide us. It was a completely new field of endeavour that had to be probed and explored before the right answers

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<sup>2</sup> Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, pp. 217-8; T.H. Marshall, *Social Policy in the Twentieth-Century* (London, Hutchinson, 1975), pp. 84, 99; Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 16-7; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, p. 51.

could be found'.<sup>3</sup> It was thus in post-war Britain, in the case of Remploy, that the realities of operating a national sheltered employment scheme were first confronted.

Given this, the early conflicts examined in Chapter Three are perhaps unsurprising. The key element revealed in this thesis has been the development in understanding of what sheltered employment should mean, based upon a notion of 'genuine employment' which was first articulated by the Remploy Board itself, and then adopted by ministers and officials as the guiding policy. Though this was initially resisted by the early Attlee government, and sometimes later contested by politicians and occasionally mitigated by the Board, this became the approach taken by successive governments for the remainder of the period. Thus the ideal of sheltered employment was not a place to simply keep disabled people 'busy', rather it was a place that tolerated a lower productivity but always strove to maximise this. Such places were therefore only partially 'sheltered' from the realities of mainstream employment and this was understood to be necessary in order for the disabled employees to feel the perceived benefits of this kind of provision. While this was considered the ideal for all sheltered employment, it was particularly stressed for Remploy. With 'genuine employment' becoming the key element, either out of genuine belief in that being the virtue of sheltered employment, or as a means of justifying the focus on commercial efficiency in controlling public expenditure, it is clear that there was no sudden change from a humanitarian focus in the period examined here to economic imperatives in the 1980s.<sup>4</sup> In Remploy in particular, commercial efficiency was always important as a policy, both in terms of operating

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<sup>3</sup> *Remploy News*, 1 (December, 1952).

<sup>4</sup> Barnes, *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination*, p. 73; Millward, 'Invalid definitions, invalid responses', pp. 184-5.

within the limits set by government for expenditure, and in terms of fulfilling what was understood as its role.

Contrary to the notion that disability was not ‘discovered’ as a political issue until the 1960s, this thesis has demonstrated that this was certainly not the case in terms of Remploy.<sup>5</sup> Rather, the scope of Remploy was discussed, and indeed contested, at a political level from the earliest days of its operation. This occurred initially within the Labour government under Attlee itself, and then most notably during the following years of Conservative government. The 1950s saw Remploy referenced frequently by Labour MPs in opposition and, in the middle of the decade, evoked as a serious attack on the government. Sheltered employment, more specifically Remploy itself, therefore represents an area of disability policy which was always ‘visible’ and politically relevant prior to the 1960s. In terms of the wider debate around the existence of a post-war consensus, therefore, this thesis has shown that Remploy represented an area of initial contest between the two major parties. However, both parties in government ultimately responded to Remploy in broadly the same way in expressing a desire to expand such provision, but only within the limits of what was considered possible based upon the commercial strength of the company and the economic conditions which dictated public expenditure priorities. As such, something of the ‘consensus in action’, described by Millward and Hampton in their studies of disability, can be seen to apply to Remploy as well.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Hampton, ‘Discovering disability’, pp. 70-1; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 8, 50; Sainsbury, ‘Disabled people and the Personal Social Services’, pp. 183-8; Younghusband, *Social Work in Britain*, pp. 210-11.

<sup>6</sup> Millward, ‘Invalid definitions, invalid responses’, pp. 165, 284; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 244.

This consensus also extended to an acceptance of a mixed economy in sheltered employment. Contrary to the view that Remploy became the only meaningful provider in the post-war period, it has been demonstrated that voluntary provision survived the Second World War, and, later joined by LAs, operated as an element of a tripartite mixed economy. The case of sheltered employment has thus been demonstrated to corroborate the current acceptance of a mixed economy of welfare in the period, in which the new statutory provision became the ‘senior partner’.<sup>7</sup> A moving frontier, in the form of Remploy, is also apparent, with changes in the perception of how overall sheltered employment provision should be delivered. That this did not equate to a coherent overall scheme, highlights the need to examine the relationships between providers in any mixed economy, as in the case here, it is clear that a fractious relationship developed, particularly between Remploy and other workshops, which directly impacted how sheltered employment was delivered.<sup>8</sup>

In revealing who was employed by Remploy, and the basis upon which this occurred, for the first time, this thesis has again served to correct a number of misconceptions about the company. Most importantly it is evident that Remploy was not a ‘catch-all’ scheme for severely disabled people. Throughout the period, access to Remploy was restricted through a range of barriers and in the form of medical and bureaucratic gatekeepers, to a select number of severely disabled people. Contrary to the popular notion, this selection was not based upon ex-service status, as even the notion of a preference for this group was quickly to disappear. It is apparent therefore that the

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<sup>7</sup> Finlayson, *Citizen, State and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990*; Younghusband, *Social Work in Britain*; Taylor, ‘Voluntary action and the state’, p. 215; Prochaska, *The Voluntary Impulse*; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, p. 277; Owen, *English Philanthropy*, p. 527; Kendall and Knapp, *The Voluntary Sector in the United Kingdom*, pp. 51-7, 133-9; Digby, *British Welfare Policy*, p. 89.

<sup>8</sup> TNA LAB 13/1029, Edwards, ‘Remploy: An Experiment in Sheltered Employment for the Severely Disabled in Great Britain’ (February, 1958), p. 14.

understood privileges held by this group in welfare and employment ceased to be universal after the Second World War, and in the case of Remploy at least, Bevin succeeded in removing the origin of a person's disability as the primary determiner in the award of such provision.<sup>9</sup> Thus the 'general classes' identified by Hampton as remaining under-served by the welfare state, were on an equal footing in accessing sheltered employment, as those disabled by war or industrial accident.<sup>10</sup> It has also been demonstrated that bar certain specific exceptions, selection was not based upon a person's disability itself, as Anderson suggested.<sup>11</sup> While the case of gender in selection is not as clear-cut, this appears again to not have been the primary deciding factor.

While alternative sheltered employment providers did in some cases still focus on these 'groups', this thesis has demonstrated that as a corollary of the importance of commercial efficiency, the chief focus on selection for Remploy was on individual productivity. It was this measure as 'potential' which guided recruitment, and this measure in 'practice' which governed retention. The common feature of the Remploy workforce was therefore an ability to meet and maintain the productivity requirements of their local factory. In terms of the current understanding of the exclusion of disabled people from the benefits of the 'golden age' of welfare and employment in the period, this thesis has therefore provided a more nuanced understanding in examining a previously unexplored group in those 'severely disabled people' eligible

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<sup>9</sup> Gagen, 'Remastering the Body', pp. 536-7; Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, pp. 37-9; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, pp. 53-4; Anderson, 'Turned into Taxpayers', pp. 469-70; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 211.

<sup>10</sup> Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*.

<sup>11</sup> Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 183.

for sheltered employment.<sup>12</sup> On one level, it has been illustrated that the achievement of 'full employment' was not extended to the Section II population.<sup>13</sup> Neither Remploy, nor the field of sheltered employment as a whole, was ever able to provide for all those made eligible for such provision under the DPEA. The possibility of reaching all those eligible was only briefly expressed and soon disappeared. In part this was due to reach and costs, but this was also due to the adoption of 'genuine employment' as the guiding policy which condoned the establishment of a certain benchmark of productivity for workers. It was therefore quickly established that in practice there were not two employment categories of disabled people as defined by the DPEA, but rather three.

Thus despite being eligible under the legislation in place, a significant number of Section II disabled people were considered not productive enough to warrant a place in sheltered employment. In this way, it is possible to say that sheltered employment can be added to the other measures of the DPEA in terms of them failing to live up to their initial promise, with a significant number excluded from this provision.<sup>14</sup> At the same time it is important to recognise that this was in large part due to a change in understanding of how sheltered employment should function which occurred in this period. It must also be considered that while it is understandable to focus on where provision failed to match original intention, Remploy did succeed in providing sheltered employment, including a wide range of social and welfare activities, for

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<sup>12</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, p. 168; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*.

<sup>13</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 80-1, 115-9; Page, *Revisiting the Welfare State*, p. 38; Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State*, pp. 267-8; Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, p. 5; Laybourn, *The Evolution of British Social Policy and the Welfare State*, p. 241.

<sup>14</sup> Borsay, *Disability and Social Policy in Britain Since 1750*, pp. 135-9, 168; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*; Bolderson, 'The Origins of the Disabled Persons Employment Quota and its Symbolic Significance', pp. 171, 184.

many thousands of disabled people under both the financial constraints of welfare expenditure and the challenges of the manufacturing industry. Furthermore, it is possible that for some employees the emphasis on productivity proved beneficial in stimulating pride in their work or in preparing them for mainstream employment. This did, however, certainly leave a large proportion of severely disabled people 'left behind' as they proved unable to meet the productivity requirements.

In considering these issues of recruitment and retention, it is apparent that the case of Remploi further demonstrates a continued paternalism evident in the measures of the welfare state. Severely disabled recruits were, at every stage of the recruitment process and once employed, continuously subject to assessment as to their capabilities and suitability for a place in a factory. This assessment was carried out by medical professionals, civil servants and Remploi officials. It was these parties who were the determiners of a person's capability for work and whether they were meeting it and this continued unabated throughout the period of the classic welfare state. While there was some evidence of individual MPs advocating on behalf of employees, and some initial examples of the involvement of organisations representing disabled people in the consultative process in the 1970s, the case of Remploi suggests that the challenges to the paternalistic state identified by Glennerster as appearing in the 1960s were slow to extend to the severely disabled.<sup>15</sup>

In exploring the case of severely disabled women for the first time, this thesis has responded to Bruley's call to consider the different experiences of women in

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<sup>15</sup> Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, p. 99.



employment.<sup>16</sup> It has been shown that sheltered employment was part of the welfare state's provision that was indeed, as Sainsbury and others have suggested, allocated primarily to men, thereby offering support to the notion that disabled women suffered something of a 'double disability'.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, once in employment it is apparent that the prevailing view of women's employment in general having involved segregation, lower-pay, inferior status and limited advancement, was also reflected in sheltered employment.<sup>18</sup> However, it is also the case that 'gender' was mitigated to a degree by 'disability' for those in Remploy, as segregation was neither absolute nor typical for many factories, and whilst wages for women were always to be less than for men, they were occasionally adapted in ways which proved comparatively beneficial for female employees. Thus it is apparent that severely disabled women had a particular experience within sheltered employment.

Remploy was clearly not a coherent monolithic scheme, but one in which a variety of factory environments undertook a range of more-or-less productive work. It is immediately apparent in the study of Remploy that the idea of 'single Remploy experience' is a mirage. Central policy did not reflect a uniform reality in the factory, with a huge range of working environments, conditions and personnel. One employee might find themselves working in a pristine and custom-built factory within easy-

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<sup>16</sup> Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, p. 93.

<sup>17</sup> Oliver, *The Politics of Disablement*, p. 70; Anderson, *War, Disability and Rehabilitation in Britain*, p. 168; Anderson, 'British Women, Disability and the Second World War'; Hampton, *Disability and the Welfare State in Britain*, p. 119; Millward, 'Social Security Policy and the Early Disability Movement', pp. 281-2; Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, pp. 224-5; Sainsbury, 'Disabled People and the Personal Social Services', p. 188.

<sup>18</sup> Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 42-3; Laybourn, *Unemployment and Employment Policies Concerning Women in Britain, 1900-1951*, p. 187; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, pp. 99-119; Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War*; Glucksmann, *Women Assemble*, p. 281; Gladstone, *The Twentieth-Century Welfare State*, pp. 119-22; Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840*, p. 186; Thane, 'Towards Equal Opportunities?', pp. 183-208; Lewis, *Women in Britain Since 1945*, pp. 78-91; Lewis, *Women in England 1870-1950*; Bradley, *Men's Work, Women's Work*, p. 116.

commuting distance from home, working on a long-term production order which proved stimulating and rewarding under a factory manager keen to promote the welfare of his workforce, while enjoying the benefits of socialising with colleagues with the potential of meeting a future husband or wife. Another person might equally find themselves struggling to travel to a dilapidated converted building, mixing periods of uninteresting and monotonous busy-work with long-stretches of idleness, under a manager desperate to improve his production results and in a factory with no social activities. Though Remploy did become more standardised as the period progressed, such widely varying experiences clearly remained common. When this is considered alongside the further variations outlined in Chapter Six among the other providers of sheltered employment, it is apparent that, for the severely disabled, sheltered employment was something of a lottery based upon location. A criticism of sheltered employment at the start of the century was that it was ‘decentralised and inconsistent’, with opportunities varying widely depending on location.<sup>19</sup> By the end of the period considered in this thesis, despite the creation of Remploy and attempts to improve coordination of the various providers, this was still largely the case.

In revealing the fundamental areas of how and why Remploy was created, how it functioned, who it was for, and the position it occupied in the wider field of such provision, the idea of the period of the classic welfare state as a ‘golden age’ for sheltered employment has been shown to be an illusion. The conclusions here build upon those of John Carrier and Ian Kendall, who examined the NHS in the period, and similarly challenged the notion of any ‘golden age’ prior to Thatcherism.<sup>20</sup> There was no clear demarcation in policy towards Remploy and sheltered employment

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<sup>19</sup> Kowalsky, ‘This Honourable Obligation’, pp. 576-7.

<sup>20</sup> J. Carrier and I. Kendall, *Health and the National Health Service* (London, Athlone Press, 1998), pp. 192-8.

between the period considered in this thesis and that following the election of Thatcher in 1979. As had been the case prior to this point, under the premise of providing ‘genuine employment’, sheltered employment continued to have the support of government, and with commercial efficiency reflecting continuity rather than revolution, Remploy continued much as before with employee numbers steadily increasing to reach 9,000 by the end of the 1980s.<sup>21</sup> It was at this same time that fundamental change actually occurred, and the first signs of the ‘end of an era’ in sheltered employment began to appear, with the launch of the ‘Interwork’ scheme in Remploy in 1988, whereby the transition of employees from sheltered employment into the mainstream turned from being an approved side-effect to a central aim.<sup>22</sup> Though the continually escalating cost of Remploy, against the backdrop of a declining manufacturing sector, was clearly a factor in this adjustment, this was also part of a wider disability policy agenda in Britain which increasingly viewed sheltered employment as inherently discriminatory and archaic. Though governments across the post-war period had applied pressure to reduce the costs of Remploy, no government had questioned the fundamental desirability of providing sheltered employment. It was this questioning of its inherent nature which was to ultimately mark the beginning of the end of Remploy as a sheltered employment provider, as it adapted over the following two decades to meet the objectives of inclusion and provide the employment services it offers today.

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<sup>21</sup> See Board of Director Meeting Minutes in TNA BM 8/80.

<sup>22</sup> Brindle, ‘Remploy factories shut up shop – the end of an era for disabled workers’, *The Guardian* (30.10.2013), <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2013/oct/30/remploy-factories-close-disabled-workers> (accessed 02/07/2018). Mr. Lee, *Hansard* (29.06.1989), vol. 155, cc. 559w. TNA BM 3/67, Remploy Limited, ‘Report on Employment of Disabled People in Remploy - 1979: Analysis of length of service of severely disabled persons employed in all Remploy factories’ (1979); TNA BM 3/54, Remploy Limited, ‘Sheltered Employment for Disabled People, A Consultative Document: The Remploy View’ (February, 1974), p. 20. Remploy Limited: *Remploy: A Very Special Company* (1999).

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**Appendix 1: Registered Section II Personnel Employed by Rempoy Compared to Unemployed, 1946-1979.**

Year	Section II employed by Rempoy <sup>1</sup>	Section II registered unemployed <sup>2</sup>
1946	164	12, 390
1947	322	10, 655
1948	866	10,850
1949	2,477	11,583
1950	4,467	8, 183
1951	5,407	-
1952	5,812	7,117
1953	6,021	6,889
1954	6,332	5,124
1955	6,581	4,575
1956	6,132	3,950
1957	6,083	3,702
1958	6,185	-
1959	6,156	4,199
1960	6,303	4,313
1961	6,203	4,543
1962	6,359	4,864
1963	6,291	5,511
1964	6,519	5,978
1965	6,823	6,141
1966	6,817	6,382
1967	6,817	7,533
1968	7,179	8,630

<sup>1</sup> For 1946 Executive Director Reports in TNA LAB 20/187, LAB 20/399. For 1947-79, TNA BM 10/2, Rempoy Limited, 'A Brief Outline of the Birth and Early Development of Rempoy Limited: Appendix B' (May, 1979).

<sup>2</sup> For 1946, TNA LAB 20/187, Disabled Persons Employment Corporation Limited, 'Executive Director's Report No. 15, Appendix H: National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled: Disabled Persons Statistics' (19.11.1946). For 1947, Mr. Isaacs, *Hansard* (09.12.1947), vol. 445 cc.843-4. For 1948-49, TNA LAB 20/707, MOL, 'Great Britain totals of registered disabled persons (section II) employed and unemployed' (April, 1949). For 1950, Mr Frederick Lee, *Hansard* (20.02.1951), vol. 484 cc. 1031-3. For 1952, TNA LAB 20/591, MOL, 'Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, Number of Unemployed Registered Disabled Persons' (October, 1952). For 1953, TNA LAB 43/268, 'Note on Letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> May, 1956 from Mr. F.G. Willey' (May, 1956). For 1954, TNA BM 8/5, MOL, 'National Advisory Council: Analysis by Age and Number of Dependants of Unemployed Registered Disabled Persons in Need of Sheltered Employment: Table B – Analysis by Age and Number of Dependants'. For 1955, Mr. Watkinson, *Hansard* (24.02.1955), vol. 537 cc. 1425-6. For 1956, Mr. Iain Macleod, *Hansard* (28.02.1956), vol. 549 cc.98-9W. For 1957, Mr. Robert Carr, *Hansard* (13.12.1957), vol. 579 cc. 1708. For 1959-61, TNA LAB 20/1071, MOL, 'Unemployed Registered Disabled Persons by Age Groups'. For 1962, Mr. Green, *Hansard* (16.04.1962), vol. 658 cc. 12-3w. For 1963-73, TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document: Table VIII Section II Register 1963-73' (October, 1973). For 1974, Mr. Harold Walker, *Hansard* (20.03.1975), vol. 888 cc. 536-42w. For 1975-76, TNA BM 10/48, Rempoy Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success: Appendix 6' (July, 1980). For 1977-79, TNA BM 10/34, Rempoy Limited, 'Report of the Working Party on the Mix of Disabilities Employed by Rempoy, Table II' (June, 1981), p. 13.

1969	7,447	9,602
1970	7,505	10,013
1971	7,518	11,120
1972	7,746	12,105
1973	7,959	11,164
1974	8,077	10, 989
1975	8,308	11,101
1976	8,514	11, 457
1977	7,972	10,901
1978	7,894	9,719
1979	8,030	8,314

Sources: See footnotes

**Appendix 2: Disability Groupings of Section II Employed in Remploy Factories,  
December 1954.**

<b>Disability Category</b>	<b>Number of Remploy Employees</b>	<b>Percentage of Remploy Workforce</b>
Amputation	593	9.04 %
Arthritis and Rheumatism	313	4.86 %
Congenital and Malformations	170	2.64 %
Diseases of the Digestive System	125	1.94 %
Diseases of the Genital-urinary system (except T.B.)	41	1.04 %
Diseases of the Heart or Circulatory System	521	8.10 %
Diseases of the lungs (except T.B.)	599	9.30 %
Diseases of the skin	18	0.27 %
Ear Defects	124	1.94 %
Eye Defects	106	1.63 %
Injuries of hand, face, neck, thorax, abdomen, pelvis and trunk	187	2.9 %
Injuries and diseases (except T.B.) of lower limb, hip, thigh, leg, foot	561	8.70 %
Injuries and diseases (except T.B.) of upper limb, shoulder, arm, forearm, hand	194	3.00 %
Paraplegia (paralysis of lower half of body)	249	3.72 %
Injuries and diseases of the spine (other than paraplegia and T.B.); curvature of the spine and spondylitis	305	4.73 %
Neurosis and psychoneurosis	135	2.08 %
Organic nervous diseases, epilepsy, disseminated sclerosis	568	8.81 %
Nervous and mental disorders other than neurosis and psychoneurosis and organic nervous diseases	395	6.13 %
Tuberculosis	837	12.99 %
Diseases and disabilities not specified	392	6.18 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,433</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Source: TNA BM 8/23, Remploy Limited, 'Managing Director's Report no. 30, Appendix L' (16.03.1955).

**Appendix 3: Distribution of Disabilities as a Percentage of Registered Section II  
and of Remploy Section II, 1963-1978.**

	<b>Among severely disabled registrants</b>										
<b>DISABILITY</b>	<b>1963</b>	<b>1965</b>	<b>1967</b>	<b>1969</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1973</b>	<b>1974</b>	<b>1975</b>	<b>1976</b>	<b>1977</b>	<b>1978</b>
Amputations	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1.8
Arthritis / Rheumatism	4	4	3	4	4	4	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4
Digestive	3	2	2	2	2	2	2.4	2	2	1.9	1.5
Genito-Urinary	0.4	0.5	1	0.4	1	1	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4
Heart / Circulatory	8	9	9	10	10	10	9.5	8.9	8.9	8.5	8
Respiratory	9	10	11	11	11	11	10.6	9.7	9.7	9.1	8.4
Skin Disease	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4
Ear Defects	3	3	3	3	3	3	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.8
Eye Defects	10	10	9	8	8	7	7.3	7.2	7.2	7.4	7.4
Injuries of the head, face, neck, thorax, abdomen, pelvis and trunk	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.2
Diseases, injuries, deformities (lower limbs)	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.9
Diseases, injuries, deformities (upper limbs)	4	4	4	4	3	3	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3
Spinal	6	6	7	7	8	8	8.4	8.3	8.3	8.5	8.7
Mental illness	7	8	9	9	9	10	10.1	10.7	10.7	10.7	10.6
Mental handicap	7	8	8	8	9	10	10	12.3	12.3	12.9	14.6
Epilepsy	10	9	9	9	9	8	8.6	8.6	8.6	9	8.9
Other organic nervous diseases	9	8	7	7	6	6	5.9	6	6	6	6.1
Tuberculosis	4	3	3	3	2	2	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.5
Unspecified	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2



	<b>Among Remply Employees</b>										
<b>DISABILITY</b>	<b>1963</b>	<b>1965</b>	<b>1967</b>	<b>1969</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1973</b>	<b>1974</b>	<b>1975</b>	<b>1976</b>	<b>1977</b>	<b>1978</b>
Amputations	7	6	6	5	5	4	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.0
Arthritis / Rheumatism	4	5	4	4	4	4	3.6	3.4	3.2	3.4	3.3
Digestive	1	1	1	2	2	2	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.4
Genito-Urinary	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.5
Heart / Circulatory	7	7	7	7	7	8	8.1	8.2	8	7.7	7.5
Respiratory	7	7	7	7	7	7	7.6	7.4	7	3.9	6.5
Skin Disease	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.4
Ear Defects	2	2	3	3	3	3	3.3	3.3	3.8	3.8	4.5
Eye Defects	2	2	2	2	2	2	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.8
Injuries of the head, face, neck, thorax, abdomen, pelvis and trunk	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.3	2	2.2	2	2
Diseases, injuries, deformities (lower limbs)	10	10	9	9	8	8	8.3	8.4	8.2	8.6	8.3
Diseases, injuries, deformities (upper limbs)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2.9	3	3.2	3
Spinal	10	10	10	10	10	10	7	7	7	7	7.3
Mental illness	6	7	7	7	7	8	8.8	9.2	9.4	9.4	9.7
Mental handicap	4	5	7	8	8	9	9.6	10.6	10.7	10.8	11.2
Epilepsy	9	10	10	10	10	10	10.3	10.2	10.2	10.2	10.6
Other organic nervous diseases	7	7	7	8	7	7	7	7.1	7.4	7.6	7.4
Tuberculosis	14	11	10	8	7	7	5.4	5.3	4.7	4.6	4.1
Unspecified	5	6	5	5	6	5	4.6	4.3	4.4	4	4.6

Source: TNA BM 10/48, Remply Limited, 'Objectives and Criteria of Success, Appendix No. 7' (1980).

#### Appendix 4: Changes in Percentage Distribution of Disabilities in Remploy, 1964-1979.

Group	Total No. 1964	% Distribution																Total No. 1979	Net change in numbers of workers 1964-1979
		1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979		
1. Physical disabilities including: amputations, injuries of head, trunk, injuries and diseases of upper and lower limbs and spine, paraplegia, etc.	1947	31.1	30.4	30.2	30.2	29.2	28.9	28.3	28.4	28.4	28	27.3	26.9	26.9	26.9	26.6	26.4	2118	+171
2. Disabilities associated with the older employee including: arthritis, rheumatism, diseases of the heart, bronchitis, emphysema, asthma, etc.	1050	16.8	17.2	16.4	16.8	16.8	17.7	17.7	17.9	17.8	18.9	18.5	18.3	17.6	17.4	16.6	15.6	1248	+198
3. Tuberculosis and pneumoconiosis	835	13.3	11.7	11	10.8	9.9	8.4	8	7.6	7.3	6.6	6.2	5.9	5.3	5.2	4.7	4.3	344	-491
4. Mental disorders and organic nervous diseases	1691	27	28.8	30.5	31	32.4	33	33.3	33.4	34.2	34.4	35.7	37.1	37.7	38	38.9	40.5	3240	+1549
5. Other disabilities including: ear and eye defects, diseases of the skin, digestive system, etc.	738	11.8	11.9	11.9	11.2	11.7	12	12.7	12.7	12.3	12.1	12.3	11.8	12.5	12.5	13.2	13.2	1058	+320
	6261																	8008	+1,747

Source: TNA BM 3/67, Remploy Limited, 'Report on Employment of Disabled People in Remploy, Appendix 4' (1979).

**Appendix 5: Registered Section I Personnel Employed by Remploy, 1948-1979.**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Section I Personnel</b>
1948	35
1949	92
1950	120
1951	149
1952	139
1953	160
1954	155
1955	130
1956	123
1957	111
1958	110
1959	101
1960	109
1961	129
1962	112
1963	98
1964	103
1965	107
1966	98
1967	67
1968	47
1969	42
1970	40
1971	37
1972	34
1973	33
1974	35
1975	31
1976	26
1977	24
1978	23
1979	20

Source: TNA BM 3/67, Remploy Limited, 'Report on Employment of Disabled People in Remploy, Appendix 2' (1979).

## Appendix 6: Organisations Providing Sheltered Employment for Severely Disabled Persons, 1945.

### Organisations included in the Scheme of Grants.

Organisation	Limited to ex-servicemen, yes or no	Types of disablement accepted	Types of Employment	Approx. no. of employees
Cambrian Factory, Ltd (British Legion)	Y	No qualification	Production of Welsh woven tweeds (all processes), Knitted goods	16
Church Army Disabled Ex-Service Mens Industries	N	No qualification	Manufacture of mattresses, pillows, kneelers and remaking of same, boot polish, confetti, fireside furniture, utility furniture, toys, brooms, brushes, metal ware (including ecclesiastical furnishings, cleaning, polishing and lacquering of same, boot and shoe repair	10
Disabled Sailors and Soldiers Workshops	Y	No qualification	Woodwork and Basket Work	17
Eastbourne Knitters – Sailors and Soldiers Home	Y	Excluding Tuberculous and epileptics	Hand machine knitting	4
East Lancashire Tuberculosis Colony	N	Adult male cases of Pulmonary TB	Sub-assembly of Aircraft Components	30
Edinburgh Nursery School Equipment Centre	N	Preference for Orthopaedic cases	Wood machining, Joinery bench work & assembly of educational toys & equipment, Arts & crafts inc. stencilling, enamelling, art drawing and spraying, soft toy making	3
Enham Village Centre	N, but men only at present. Will accept both sexes in time.	Non infectious TB males at present. Partially healed male cases in future	Woodworking, Joinery, cabinet making,	100
Erskine House Workshops (Princess Louise Scottish Hospital for Limbless Sailors & Soldiers)	Male persons, due to war operations	No qualification	Furniture making, upholstery, basket making, boot making & repairing (inc. surgical boots), arts & crafts, poultry farming, gardening	22
King's Roll Clerks Association Ltd.	Y both sexes	No qualification	Clerical, typing, mutligraphing	17
King's Roll War Disabled, Men's Association Ltd	Y	Disability of 50% of over	Leatherwork inc. fancy leather goods of all kinds. Printing, typing and duplicating, hand painting on glassware, trays etc.	20
Longton Disabled Soldiers & Sailors Cardboard Box Factory	Y	No qualifications	Cardboard box making	7

Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops	London	Y	N/A	Wood machining, woodwork assembly, Polishing, bedding, manufacture, basket making, lacquer work	100
	Liverpool			Wood machining, Polishing, cabinet assembly	56
	Colchester			Basket making	16
	Edinburgh			Brush making	30
	Inverness			Bedding manufacture, cabinet making, furniture making, light wood work, upholstery repairs	15
Maes-yr-Haf Settlement	N (men only)		N/A	Floor rug weaving, woodwork	10
Painted Fabrics Ltd	Y		Particularly hand injuries	Stencilling and various forms of dyeing and patterning	Varied and uncertain numbers
St. Loyes College for the Training and Rehabilitation of the Disabled	N		N/A	Watch & clock repair	3 (exc. Training college trainees)
Spero Fund for the Industrial Welfare of Tuberculous Persons	N		TB	Light leather work, carpentry, chopping and bundling firewood	32

Source: TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, 'Scheme of Grants to Undertakings Employing Severely Disabled Persons: Organisations at present included in the Scheme, S.E.C I' (1945).

### Organisations not included in the Scheme of Grants.

Organisation	Type of disablement accepted	Types of employment	Approx. number employed
The Royal Cripples Hospital	Orthopaedics	Surgical boot manufacture repair & alteration. Surgical appliance manufacture	25 (50 -60 on home work)
Cleethorpes Appliance Industries (controlled by the Cleethorpes TB After-Care Committee)	TB	Woodwork, basket-making	2 full time, 2 part time
National Society for Epileptics, The Colony	Epileptics only	Gardening, tailoring, boot & shoe repairs, watch & clock repairs, carpentry	Approx. 600
John Groom's Crippleage	All – provided have sight and use of fingers	Artificial flower making, small engineering assembly	200 living in, 30 living out (women)
Thermega Ltd (owned and controlled by the Ex-Service Welfare Society)	Neurosis, psychosis and associated diseases	Manufacture of electrical appliances, woodwork, cardboard box making	36 disabled men, 17 non-disabled men
'Factory in the Field' (Administered by Leeds Corporation)	TB	Brush-making, printing, firewood	35
Shaftesbury Society and Ragged School Union	All –provided applicants have use of hands and can distinguish colours	Making up of dyed feathers into sprays (usually by women in their own homes)	18 women, 3 men
British Legion Industries	TB	Hospital porters and orderlies, printing, carpentry, fancy good, clerical, poultry and pig farming, light engineering, building repairs, female domestics and nurses	200 men, 20 women
The Ransom Sanatorium	TB	Simple joinery work for ex-patients	24
Papworth Village Settlement	TB	Cabinet making, upholstery, leather and fibre travelling goods, printing	600
British Legion Poppy Factory	All –except blindness	Artificial flower making –mainly poppies	305 (men only)
Lanarkshire Society for the Deaf	Deafness	Market Gardening	7
Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops (Dundee)	All –except TB	Cabinet making, general woodworking, French polishing	52
Lady Haig Poppy Factory	All – except TB	Poppy and wreath making, picture framing and lamp shades	80
Industrial Crafts Ltd.	All – preference for epileptics	Pram manufacture, basket making	303
Kersley Krafts Ltd	Mainly epileptics, and those necessitating a sitting occupation	Toy manufacture	56
Ayrshire Society for the Deaf	Deafness	Market Gardening	6
Hostel for Crippled and Invalid Women Workers	Crippled and invalid women	Fine needlework	28
Nottingham Cripples Guild	Orthopaedic cases	Orthopaedic surgical appliance making in leather work, ironwork and Perspex	14
Searchlight Home for Cripples	Orthopaedic, neurosis and hear cases (must be able to use hands)	Boot and shoe repairing, basket making, leather work, toy making, weaving	18 (men only)
Woolley Industries Ltd	TB	Joinery, pig farming, transport driving, assistant	8 (inc. 1 woman)

		porters, shop keeping	
Wrenbury Hall Tuberculosis Colony	TB	Carpentry, Poultry farming, brush-making, market gardening, handicrafts	30-40

Source: TNA LAB 20/173, SEC, 'Undertakings Providing Employment for the Severely Disabled other than those at present included in the Ministry of Labour and National Service Scheme of Grants S.E.C 2' (1945).

**Appendix 7: Approved Independent Charitable Sheltered Employment for Severely Disabled Persons, 1965.**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Persons Accepted</b>	<b>Numbers employed</b>
Birmingham Workshop for Spastics	Severely disabled spastics, men and women	10
British Legion Industries	Mentally handicapped, bronchitics, disabled ex-service men and women	2
British Red Cross Society	Severely disabled men	5
Cambrian Factory Ltd	Severely disabled ex-servicemen	18
Camphill Village Trust (3 sites)	Mentally handicapped men and women	183
Church Army Rehabilitation Centre	All classes of severely disabled men	12
Dorincourt Estates	All types of severely disabled men and women	4
Enham-Alamein Village Centre	Men and women with disabilities other than TB	3
Erskine Hospital Workshops	Severely disabled ex-servicemen	28
Haven Products Ltd. (2 sites)	All classes of severely disabled men and women	75
Hostels for Crippled and Invalid Women Workers	All classes of severely disabled women except TB, asthma and mentally handicapped	1
Industrial Therapy Organisation Ltd.	Mainly mentally handicapped men and women, some physically handicapped also	68
Lord Roberts Workshops (7 sites)	Disabled ex-service men and women	161
Papworth Village Settlement	Severely disabled non TB men and women	31
St. Loyes College	All classes of severely disabled men and women	16
School of Stitchery	Severely disabled women and girls	33
Scottish Council for Care of Spastics	Cerebral palsied men and women	15
Scottish Epilepsy Association	Epileptic men and women	49
Scottish Hansel Village Circle	All classes of severely disabled men and women	9
Sherrards Training Centre	Cerebral palsied young men and women	53
Thermega Ltd	Severely disabled ex-servicemen and women –preference for suffers from psychosis and neurosis	41
Thistlecraft Ltd.	All types of severely disabled, ex-service men preferred	4
Yateley Industries for Disabled Girls	Severely crippled women and girls	42
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>863</b>

Source: TNA LAB 20/1073, SEC, 'Approved arrangements made by Local Authorities for providing sheltered employment for severely disabled sighted persons' (1965).



**Appendix 8: Traditional and New Trades Undertaken in Approved LA and Charitable Sheltered Workshops, 1970.**

<b>Traditional Trades</b>		
	LA Workshops	Charitable Workshops
Baskets	-	2
Bedding and Upholstery	-	5
Boots and shoes	-	2
Bookbinding	-	4
Brushes and mops	-	1
Candles	-	1
Gardening	4	-
Garden produce	-	2
Glasswear	-	1
Laundry	-	3
Machine Knitting	-	8
Picture Graining	-	2
Pottery and ceramics	-	3
Sewing, dressmaking etc.	-	4
Toys	-	4
Watch and clock repairs	-	1
Weaving	-	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>47</b>

<b>New Trades</b>		
	LA Workshops	Charitable Workshops
Assembly and light engineering	12	14
Cardboard boxes	1	1
Carpentry	15	11
Coach-building	-	1
Commercial stationery	-	2
Computer card punching	-	1
Concrete moulding	1	-
Electrical goods and assembly	1	1
Industrial protective clothing	1	-
Metal goods and processing	-	3
Motor repair	-	1
Packaging	2	1
Painting and finishing	-	1
Parachutes	-	1
Plastics and leather	1	3
Printed textiles	-	2
Printing	-	5
Road signs	1	-
Soap and cosmetics	-	1
Surgical appliances	-	1
Souvenirs	-	1
Temperature service	-	1
Timber buildings	-	1
Wigmaking	1	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>53</b>

Source: TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document: Table IV' (October, 1973), p. 25.

**Appendix 9: Basic Wage Rates Per Week For Men Over 21 in LA and Voluntary Sheltered Workshops, 1973.**

<b>LA Sheltered Workshops</b>		
<b>Rates Paid</b>	<b>Amount £</b>	<b>No. of workshops</b>
National Joint Council Journeyman's for furniture trade	27.60	1
Rate linked with National Joint Council for Furniture Trade	23.67	1
Associated with Manual Workers' Group	21.40	4
	18.83	1
	18.44	1
	17.16	1
	19.53	1
LA manual workers Group A	19.85	3
Based on Remploy rate	18.60	1
Remploy basic rate	18.12	6
80% of LA semi-skilled engineer workers' rate	17.64	1
Locally Negotiated Rates	19.87	1
	18.55	1
	15.72	1
	15.56	1

<b>Voluntary Sheltered Workshops</b>		
<b>Rates Paid</b>	<b>Amount £</b>	<b>No. of workshops</b>
National Joint Council for Furniture Trade Labourers rate	24.43	4
National Joint Council for Workshops for the Blind	21.20	1
LA Manual Workers' Group B	20.30	1
Rates linked to Woollen and Worsted Industry	19.00	1
Remploy basic rate	18.12	3
Rates based on Toy Manufacturing Wages Council Rate	12.20	1
Locally agreed	24.10	1
	22.62	1
	19.65	1
	18.40	1
	17.20	1
	15.25	1
	15.00	3
	14.50	3
	14.00	1
	11.00	1
	10.14	1
	10.00	2

	9.50	1
	0.50-1.25	3 (accommodation included)

Source: TNA LAB 20/1429, DE, 'Sheltered Employment: A Draft Consultative Document, Table VII' (October, 1973).

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